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# WILL THEY KNOW WHO WE ARE?

New York Plays

by

Maria Brandt

For Emily and William, for everything.

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# Will They Know Who We Are?

## by Maria Brandt

A collection of 27 short works intended to be performed with an ensemble cast.  
All of the works are also available individually as short plays.

### CHARACTERS:

#### *Will They Know Who We Are?*

- Citizen, anyone

#### *The Door*

- Maeve, woman, Evelyn's sister, late 30s
- Evelyn, woman, Maeve's sister, late 20s

#### *Speaking Through a Screen*

- Rose, woman, of Polish descent, 80s
- Sam, man, landscaper, 20s

#### *Ninety Degrees*

- Nancy, woman, part-Seneca, teenager
- George, man, part-Seneca, Nancy's grandfather, 70s

#### *Page Twenty-Seven*

- Hank, man, Roger's brother, 30s
- Roger, man, 30s or 40s, Hank's brother

#### *Goodbye*

- Lucy, woman, Anita's sister, early 30s
- Anita, woman, Lucy's sister, late 30s
- Dead Anita, like Anita, but grotesque
- Tobias, man, Lucy's husband, early 30s

#### *Part of Your Body*

- Ava, woman, politician, 40s
- Jonathan, man, Ava's clerk, 30s

#### *Little Hands*

- Rachel, woman, Jennifer and Jane's friend, 30s
- Jennifer, woman, Rachel and Jane's friend, 30s
- Jane, woman, Rachel and Jennifer's friend, 30s

#### *War/Bathtub*

- Amina, woman, 8-years-old
- Simone, woman, Amina's mother, 20s

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

*As Little Conscious Thought as Possible*

- Jerome, man, Maggie's ex-husband, 30s or 40s
- Maggie, woman, Jerome's ex-wife, 30s or 40s

*Kink*

- Katie, woman, Jim's girlfriend, late teens
- Jim, man, Katie's boyfriend, late teens

*Voyeurism*

- Jackson, man, white, 30s
- John, man, white, 30s
- Hugh, man, black, teenager

*Steal*

- Peter, man, union-worker, 30s
- Marcus, man, union-worker, 30s
- Earnest, man, union-worker, 30s

*Rip Van Winkle*

- Rip Van Winkle, man, 20s, a very old man
- Dame Van Winkle, woman, Rip Van Winkle's wife, 20s
- Rip Junior, man, Rip Van Winkle's son, 20s
- Nicholas Vedder, man, owner of the local pub
- The Ghosts of Henry Hudson's Crew, anyone

*It Gets You*

- Chorus, corporate leaders "disguised" as farmers, anyone
- Martha, woman, farmer, 40s
- Jennifer, woman, corporate-worker, 20s

*Putting Off*

- Hannah, woman, John's wife, 70s
- John, man, Hannah's husband, 70s

*Sexy Decoy*

- Patrick, man, Irish immigrant, 20s
- Maranne, woman, Irish immigrant, 20s

*The Next Thing*

- Josephine, woman, of Italian descent, 50s
- Anthony, man, of Italian descent, 50s

*Two Bodies in a Field*

- Jim, man, Ann's husband, late 40s
- Ann, woman, Jim's wife, late 40s

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

*They Were Real*

- Maria, woman, Mexican migrant worker, 20s
- Sal, man, Mexican migrant worker, 20s

*Cold War*

- Daniel, man, West Point student, 20s
- Spike, man, West Point student, 20s
- Roger, man, West Point student, 20s

*Home*

- Lucy, woman, Jack's sister, 13-years-old
- Jack, man, Lucy's brother, 17-years-old
- David, man, Jack's friend, 17-years-old

*Relativity*

- Chastity, woman, black, 18-years-old
- Brad, man, white, 19-years-old

*Litter*

- Josh, man, Sylvia's husband, 40s
- Sylvia, woman, Josh's wife, 30s
- Jasmine, woman, Tom's wife, 40s
- Tom, man, Jasmine's husband, 40s

*Backwards*

- Darcy, woman, 30s, almost like a cartoon character
- Olivia, woman, 40s

*Gay Marriage*

- Michael, man, teenager
- Steve, man, teenager
- Barb, woman, Stella's wife
- Stella, woman, Barb's wife

*Play Without a Prompt*

- Loudspeaker, a voice
- Person, a traveler, anyone
- Busker, anyone
- Passengers, a various group

## **PRODUCTION NOTES**

*Will They Know Who We Are?* works best with a simple stage that makes transitioning as seamless as possible. This might mean having two or three separate playing spaces that share pieces; it might mean having one large playing space with multiple abstract pieces; it might mean something else. The key is privileging suggestion over realism.

## **PROPERTY LIST AT END OF PLAY**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

*New York Plays* was originally produced by Out of Pocket Productions at MuCCC in Rochester, NY, in October 2014, with the following artists:

*Director:* Stephanie Roosa

*Stage Manager:* Elissa Burke

*Designers:* Stephanie Roosa and Josh Burke

*Ensemble Cast:* Denise Bartalo, Don Bartalo, Abby DeVuyst, David Jason Kyle, Barbara Lobb, Adam Petzold, Allison Roberts, Stephanie Roosa, Stephanie Sheak, Kate Sherman, Kevin Sean Sweeney

This production featured seventeen of the plays with one intermission. The remaining ten plays were performed as readings during the production's run. For text that was added between plays for this production to maintain consistency, please see addendum at end of play.

## **PLAY DEVELOPMENT**

*Litter*

The Women's Theatre Project, Girl Play Festival, Fort Lauderdale, Reading

*The Next Thing*

Geva Theatre Center and Writers and Books, 2 Pages/2 Voices Competition, Rochester, Reading

*C4: Chamber Four Literary Magazine*, Online Publication

*Relativity*

Subversive Theatre Company, Subversive Shorts Festival, Buffalo, Finalist  
Over Here Theatre Company, ObamAmerica Festival, London, Finalist

*Speaking Through a Screen*

*InDigest Literary Magazine*, Online Publication

*They Were Real*

Geva Theatre Center and Writers and Books, 2 Pages/2 Voices Competition, Rochester, Reading

## PREFACE

I grew up in East Patchogue and East Islip, two small towns on the south shore of Long Island. My father grew up on a turkey farm in Speonk, and my mother grew up in an Italian neighborhood in Brooklyn. My childhood was saturated with the smell of salt water, the allure of the Long Island Railroad, and the influence of Manhattan. This was New York—or so I thought. Twelve years ago, I moved with my husband at the time to Rochester, New York, and realized how wrong I was. In fact, I still remember the first time a fellow Rochestarian told me she was “going to New York” for the weekend, as if *that* New York were somehow different from *this* New York, as if the New York of my childhood were somehow different from the New York I’m still discovering as an adult.

As such, I’m well aware the plays in this collection are by no means representative of New York State. Instead, they embody my changing fascination with the diverse geography and people I’ve encountered through an array of subjective experiences. I’ve dug for clams in the Great South Bay; I’ve missed trains at Penn Station; I’ve hiked forest trails in the Mohonk Preserve; I’ve climbed mountains in the Adirondacks; I’ve picked and eaten New York apples; I’ve swam in the Finger Lakes and in the Atlantic Ocean; I’ve taken multiple, lingering day trips to Buffalo, Syracuse, and Ithaca with my then-husband and son; I’ve camped along Lake Ontario; I’ve discovered favorite restaurants in the Thousand Islands and the Southern Tier; I’ve attended funerals and weddings, made and lost friends, worked at a department store and print shop, launched a career, had a baby, and driven countless hours and miles here. New York—all of it—is my home.

And these are my plays about that home. I’ve chosen to write plays in part because of the rich history this state holds in relation to the dramatic arts, and in part because of my own history with theatre. More than anything, though, I wanted to explore the potential of multiple dramatic forms to body forth the New York of my imagination, as Shakespeare might have said. No literary form confronts the body quite like plays. Whether you read these plays or perform them, I invite you to consider that curious confrontation, that transformative space where imagination and embodiment collide.

\*

I would like to thank Monroe Community College for granting me a professional leave during the Fall 2013 semester, enabling me to wrangle with the final round of revisions in earnest. I’d also like to thank Stephanie Roosa and Out of Pocket Productions for believing enough in this project to put it on its feet. I’d like to thank my fellow Straw Mat Writers, three beautiful women who helped me find the beating heart of each of these short plays; Emily Brandt for catalyzing Project MAE, which birthed this collection; and the whole Brandt clan for supporting me through this collection and so much more. Most of all, I’d like to thank my son, William, who inspires me and keeps me grounded, at the same time.

## Will They Know Who We Are? by Maria Brandt

### WILL THEY KNOW WHO WE ARE?

*CHARACTERS:* U.S. CITIZEN; anyone.

*AT RISE:* Different-sized steel boxes are scattered around the stage. Through the course of the play, CITIZEN arranges the boxes into buildings that form something like the grid of Manhattan, preferably the far-east side of the grid, near 34<sup>th</sup> or 42<sup>nd</sup> Street.

#### CITIZEN

How to build a city? Where to start? North to south? To honor the sun? (*CITIZEN looks for the sun.*) Where is the sun? (*CITIZEN shields his/her eyes.*) Yes, the sun! (*CITIZEN works.*) Let us build a city from north to south to honor the sun! (*CITIZEN pauses.*) To honor? (*CITIZEN works.*) No, to capture the sun, let us build a city to capture the sun. (*CITIZEN pauses.*) Should our city capture the sun? Who should be in control, our city or the sun? (*CITIZEN works.*) We will worship the sun *and* we will capture the sun. The sun will pour its rays down the grid of our city and we will mark the days and nights, the equal days and the equal nights, the equinoxes! Because we will honor equality, we will capture equality, honoring, capturing, yes! (*CITIZEN stops working.*) No. (*CITIZEN rests and wipes his/her brow.*) We will not honor equality, nix on north to south. (*CITIZEN starts to rotate the grid.*) Let us turn ourselves, let us rotate our city to the east and let us honor our *city*, let us spin! (*CITIZEN works.*) Our city of steel, our city of nights, our city of electric words and invisible money and sidewalks that float their cracks up your ass. (*CITIZEN stops.*) No. (*CITIZEN works.*) Yes. That float their cracks up your ass. Rotated towards the east from the geographic north, two days a year, the sun. (*CITIZEN dances.*) Two days a year, the sun! (*CITIZEN stands still. Then, CITIZEN works.*) Two days a year the sun will stop on the grid of our city, its bones, the racks upon which it hangs its flesh. Two days a year, the sun will rise and our buildings will push its light into canyons edged from east to west, like Stonehenge, captured, the light will— (*CITIZEN makes some extreme and inspired gesture and sound.*) Ignite! It will ignite our city, and we will think to ourselves, that is the *sun*, we will worship its fire, we will worship the city that has captured its fire, that city is great, great we are! (*CITIZEN works.*) Two days a year, two days, which days to honor the sun? Which days to capture the sun? Not the equinoxes, let us not mark equality, let us not honor equality, but what? Which days? How to choose the days? Not the solstices, others have honored the solstices, we need our own days to mark, our own days to honor, the last stop buster, the last stop before we dig up our own bones. (*CITIZEN stops, wipes his/her brow, then works.*) Rotate to the east, almost there, the last stop, the train lets out. (*CITIZEN makes the sound of a train.*) The train lets out, we walk the streets, we stare in wonder at the captured sun. Which days? How to measure our own bones? (*CITIZEN stops and laughs.*) Yes! (*CITIZEN covers his/her eyes*

CITIZEN, *Continued*

*and spins until he/she falls. Then, while on the ground, CITIZEN removes a tape measure.*) Of course, this is it, this is how we decide who we are, this is always how we decide who we are! (*CITIZEN painstakingly measures the distance from where he/she fell to where the boxes currently rest.*) Twenty-nine degrees. (*CITIZEN works.*) There we have it, twenty-nine degrees to the east, twenty-nine degrees to the east of the geographic north, ooli-ooli-ooli! (*CITIZEN dances while working.*) We've measured and we've marked, the people will get off their trains, they'll stop and stare, they'll say, "Ooli-ooli-ooli," because we've decided where to start, because we *know* who we are! (*CITIZEN works.*) And the scientists will come, this is important, they'll come in the future and they'll notice that two days a year our city captures the sun in the bones of its grid, so they'll measure that grid, and they'll make their charts, and they'll figure it out! They'll use their research to determine the first, and then they'll study— (*CITIZEN laughs and dances.*) And they'll determine the second, and they'll follow our clues and they'll figure it out, they'll—! (*CITIZEN pauses.*) But will they? Or will they scratch their heads? Will they figure out the days, but still scratch their heads? (*CITIZEN rests, scratches his/her head.*) "What could it all mean?" they'll say, "What could it all mean?" (*CITIZEN pauses. Silence. Then, CITIZEN works.*) They won't know what it means, the motivation, the *raison d'être*, the *zeitgeist*, they'll look at their graphs and their electronic texts, they'll figure out the days, but they won't know what it means. They'll zip to their distant stars to conduct personal interviews, they'll finger the model trains they've crafted with popsicle sticks, they'll expostulate and hypothesize and write their treatises, "we have determined the days, but what could it all mean?" (*CITIZEN stands still.*) What could it all...? (*CITIZEN points to the sky, a burst of inspiration.*) But the young ones, with their fancy hats, the young ones will stand on blocks of steel! (*CITIZEN stands on a block of steel.*) "I have solved the riddle," they will say! "Listen to me while I list my sources!" (*CITIZEN climbs down.*) They'll figure us out, the young ones will... (*CITIZEN stands still.*) But will they? (*Exhausted, CITIZEN sits.*) Maybe a small child with rings on her fingers will find in a dirty archived box some crumpled sheet music and they'll sing the songs, but will they know who we are? Maybe they'll take off their hats and bake apple pies and pull the levers in old voting booths, but will they—? (*Lights begin to dim.*) They'll scratch their heads and... (*CITIZEN starts finishing the city. This is very slow.*) So tall, so filled with life and steel and bones, they'll discover our songs, "Start spreading the news, I'm leaving today," they'll study and they'll... (*Exhausted, CITIZEN drops to his/her knees.*) They will never know who we are...

*CITIZEN lifts his/her head and watches in silent awe as some fantastic lighting effect simulates Manhattanhenge.*

**LIGHTS FADE TO BLACK.**

## THE DOOR

**CHARACTERS:** MAEVE, female; late 30s.  
EVELYN, Maeve's sister, late 20s.

**AT RISE:** MAEVE and EVELYN are packing boxes in a basement on the south shore of Long Island. Lots of tools and a wall.

MAEVE

I went to the beach at the end of the road, just before you got here.

EVEYLYN

Yeah?

MAEVE

It's small, much smaller than it used to be.

EVEYLYN

I don't think so. (*Beat. A look from MAEVE.*) What?

MAEVE

How would you know?

EVELYN

What's that supposed to mean?

MAEVE

You were too little, dad and I mostly went without you. (*EVELYN freezes, the blow hit, then packs.*) I'd pick up dead horseshoe crabs and pretend they were swords, they'd have all this dried-out seaweed sticking to their shells, I didn't care, and we'd wade through foam from the bay, digging our toes into the mud, looking for clams so mom could make a pot of chowder. (*Beat.*) I used to think we could walk around the entire island just by following that shoreline. (*Beat.*) We never got past the first bend. (*Beat.*) It's so small now. (*Short, awkward pause.*)

EVELYN

I need to catch the 2:32 train.

MAEVE

Oh.

EVELYN

And I *do* remember the beach, it was always small, and it smelled like rotten eggs.

MAEVE

Now it does. It didn't then.

*THEY pack.*

EVELYN

Maeve— *(Beat.)*

MAEVE

What?

EVELYN

Nothing, I'm glad I came, Dad spent a lot of time down here, before— *(Beat.)*

MAEVE

I know.

EVELYN

He'd build things, remember?

MAEVE

"Things." *(They both smile.)* We never knew what, maybe he never built anything.

EVELYN

He built me a bookshelf. *(Beat.)*

MAEVE

That's right. *(She picks up a tool.)* He built *you* a bookshelf, and now *you're* catching the 2:32 train.

*For a moment, they hate each other.*

EVELYN

What do you want from me?

MAEVE

I'm sorry—

EVELYN

Jesus, Maeve—

MAEVE

I said I'm sorry. *(Beat.)* It's just that you have this whole *life* and I'm still— *(Beat. She sets the tool on top of a box.)* I should wrap this.

EVELYN

It's okay.

MAEVE

It's not okay, you have everything and I'm stuck. (*Short, awkward pause.*) Last night, at the restaurant, someone took a crate of blue-claws out of the freezer and forgot to put them back. The crabs unfroze and climbed out of the crate, all over the floor, looking for, I'd pick one up with tongs and three more would escape, all over the concrete floor, I was sweating like crazy. (*Beat.*) A swarm of fucking blue-claws, clack clack clack, like in a nightmare—

*Silence. She wraps the tool in newspaper.*

EVELYN

You're not stuck. (*MAEVE shoots her a look.*) He loved that place—

MAEVE

Exactly.

EVELYN

But you're not stuck, you can leave any time you want—

MAEVE

He built that place from nothing, a warehouse with a freezer, then a big piece of polished driftwood—

EVELYN

I know but—

MAEVE

What am I supposed to do? We'd sit around that driftwood, sometimes the guys would come in after hauling clams, we'd talk about taxes and the beach closing, do you remember any of this?

EVELYN

Maeve—

MAEVE

Then he hired John to make chowder and we'd sell flounder, mussels, bay scallops, we opened some docking slips, set up tables, I can't— (*She stops and watches EVELYN pack.*) Besides, how would I make a living? I never went to college, all I know how to do is shuck clams and bushel crabs. (*Beat.*) And I hate crabs, I've always hated crabs, I remember he would stuff a bag of crabs in a big pot of boiling water in the kitchen, just upstairs, and they would click their claws against the lid, this great, sorry attempt at freedom, I hated them. Even those horseshoe crabs, dripping with dried-out seaweed, I dropped one once and bugs swarmed out of the cracks, bugs. And I hated that beach, we tried to walk around the island, like we could find a way, but we never got past the first bend. (*Beat.*) And he built you a

MAEVE, *Continued*

bookshelf and now *you* have a place for your books. (*Beat.*) *You're* catching a 2:32 train and *you* know where *you're* going.

*EVELYN* goes to touch MAEVE, then stops.

EVELYN

Maeve, I need to— (*Pause.*)

MAEVE

When we were little, before you were born, Mom would say, “Dad’s downstairs, he’s building something,” I convinced myself he was building something secret, like a door. I started dreaming about that door, details like its shape or its location and what might be on the other side, sometimes it was a room, sometimes a— (*Beat.*) And I told him my dreams, I remember, him and mom, he was driving and I was in the backseat, we were on Sunrise Highway, and I came down here afterwards, by myself, and rubbed my hands all over the wall trying to find that door. (*Beat.*) I thought he was building that door for me, so I could find, so I could escape.

*MAEVE* rubs her hands over the wall.  
*EVELYN* watches.

**This is Not the End of “The Door”**  
**Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**

## SPEAKING THROUGH A SCREEN

*CHARACTERS:* ROSE, 80s; a woman, of Polish descent.  
SAM, 20s; a landscaper.

*AT RISE:* ROSE sits on a reclining chair on a screen-enclosed porch near the St. Lawrence River in the late 1970s. She is covered in blankets. When she speaks, she yells, as if she were hard of hearing. SAM is working outside. A pile of gigantic stones sits in the corner of the porch. The effect can be absurd.

ROSE

It was 1904. Come here. Press your face against the screen so I can see you. (*SAM revs a power tool. ROSE talks louder.*) You and your noise, you don't want to hear, no one wants to hear, no one cares that it was 1904, that he worked on the Castle. That he carried stones from boats on the river and placed those stones in piles for the pulleys, then climbed his ladder and lifted the stones, that he built the Castle. (*SAM turns off the power tool. ROSE still yells.*) Not the Power House, not the Tower, not even the Gazebo. (*She realizes the power tool has been shut off. She's a little quieter.*) The Castle. Come closer. Press your face against the screen. (*SAM comes closer but does not press his face against the screen.*) You're a shadow, a haunt.

SAM

Ma'am?

*Silence. SAM turns and revs the power tool. ROSE yells above the noise.*

ROSE

He used tools to chisel those stones into shape, nothing you plug into the wall, he used his hands and made something real. (*She knocks on the window sill. He doesn't hear her.*) I've never been to the Castle, but I know where it is, on one of those small islands in the middle of the river. (*She knocks again, but he doesn't hear her, so she leans as close to the window as she can without falling out of her chair.*) He crafted stones while we lived in a stuffed one-room apartment in Manhattan with the other Polacks. They played their accordions and we could hear them dancing, their feet pounding on the wood floors, and we could smell their studzienina and golabki, and we waited for him to come back so he could dance too. He crafted stones and sent us the money, and I went to correspondence school. (*She covers her ears.*) And then the letter came. "Dear Mrs. Wachnick." The letter the letter the letter. (*Silence. Then, she removes her hands from her ears and yells more loudly.*) And then the lady of the Castle died, she died, and bells rang across the river. He had been dead already, dead like a rat, not like a rat, like a mouse that got stuck in a maze scuttling for cheese that isn't there, a shadow, he had been dead and the maze kept going, and the other mice crawled through, their tails cut off, but when she died, when the lady of the Castle died, someone took

ROSE, *Continued*

the maze away, poof, like a magic trick, and all the work stopped, and the rains kept coming, and the stones fell to ruin. I watched my mother stumble into her bed and never get out again, I dropped my correspondence course so I could feed my mother chicken soup with a spoon, I let that one-room apartment stuff me inside its walls. But I took what I learned in my correspondence course and wrote a letter, and they wrote me back, and I read a book and knew the work had stopped, I knew the Castle tumbled to the ground! (*She makes a loud noise, maybe bangs the table or stomps her foot. SAM turns off the power tool.*) I've paid young men for fifty years, since 1927, to row to the island and steal me a stone. Will you row to the island? Will you steal me a stone? I'll pay you. I'll give you a dollar.

SAM

Ma'am?

ROSE

When my mother died I moved to this village by the river and sat on this porch and the wind has chilled my bones, the wind that blows from Ontario east, pushing cargo boats with their loads of furniture and specialty goods, but I've collected fifty stones. I've worked my body stacking fifty stones into a pile in the corner of this room. (*She points to the pile.*) One prayer for each stone that I've stolen like a thief!

SAM

Ma'am?

ROSE

(*She prays.*) "I remember you, my father, who used to know the notes of the songs. I pray on the first stone for the songs to sound again. I pray on the second stone for the flavor of pickled pigs' feet and cabbage stuffed with beef. I pray for correspondence and I pray for Manhattan and I pray for mothers who have died and for chicken soup and for ladders. I pray for dry ladders and for men who climb those ladders and lift their stones and who *never* slip on the highest rung, who *never* fall through the winter cold, who *never* lie in a heap of bones in the tall grass that moves by the river...."

SAM

You mean the Castle?

ROSE

Yes. The Castle. *They* tell the story of the lady of the Castle. I used what I learned in my correspondence course and wrote a letter and learned nothing about my father, only about the lady of the Castle.

SAM

Right here?

ROSE

Yes. Right here. *They* tell the story of the lady of the Castle but *no one* tells the story of my father, of the man who fell from his ladder in the rain and whose bones were crushed on a pile of stones!

SAM

The Castle on the island in the river?

ROSE

Yes! In the river! (*She's breathing heavily.*) Will you row your boat, young man? Will you steal me a stone? I'll give you a dollar.

SAM

They're working on the Castle again Ma'am.

ROSE

What?

SAM

(*He's excited.*) They're rebuilding it, they want to finish it this time, they have tools, power tools, they're rebuilding the Castle! Boldt Castle! To honor the lady! It'll be famous!

ROSE

(*Her voice gets louder again.*) To honor the lady?

SAM

They want people to hear the story and visit us.

ROSE

They'll never do it!

SAM

It's for the tourists, ma'am, so we can have more tourists, so we can have a life. (*ROSE struggles to rise from her chair, her blankets falling in heaps around her. SAM approaches the window. He presses his face into the screen, creating hideous shadows.*) They want us to have a life.

**This is Not the End of "Speaking through a Screen"**  
**Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**

NINETY DEGREES

**CHARACTERS:**        *NANCY; Teenager, part-Seneca.  
GEORGE; Nancy's grandfather, 70s,  
Seneca.*

**AT RISE:**            *Almost 9 p.m., early September, on a hill  
above Canandaigua Lake. GEORGE  
leans against his walking stick and reads  
a signpost. NANCY sits on her backpack.  
Over the course of the play, the lights  
grow darker as the sun goes fully down.*

NANCY

*(She pulls out two apples and a water bottle.)* You hungry?

GEORGE

Sure. *(He struggles to sit next to NANCY over these next lines. She shares with him.)* Must be ninety degrees.

NANCY

Indian Summer. *(Beat.)* Sorry. *(Beat.)* She talking to you yet?

GEORGE

Nah, I'll give her a few days. *(They eat.)*

NANCY

They've been doing this forever, it's a Seneca tradition.

GEORGE

*(He gestures to the signpost, sarcastic.)* So they say.

NANCY

You'll see, the lights—

GEORGE

They'll appear one at a time until they wrap around the lake, I know.

NANCY

We used to come here when I was a kid, spread out a picnic, it felt like magic, like something old, like I was connected. *(Beat.)*

GEORGE

You didn't think you were connected?

You know what I mean. NANCY

Nancy.... GEORGE

What did you expect? (*Beat.*) NANCY

I could tell you a story. GEORGE

I don't think so. (*Pause.*) NANCY

Okay, we can sit quietly. (*Pause. GEORGE looks sideways at NANCY.*) It's about a snake. GEORGE

You're not sitting quietly. NANCY

The Great Snake. GEORGE

I know about the Great Snake. NANCY

How do you— GEORGE

I'm not stupid. (*Beat.*) NANCY

Did your mother— GEORGE

No. (*Beat.*) NANCY

Then how? (*NANCY stands and looks at the signpost.*) I see. (*Beat.*) I'll tell you what that *signpost* leaves out. GEORGE

Suit yourself. NANCY

GEORGE

That *signpost* tells nothing of how the Great Snake uprooted every tree on this hill with the force of its back, stripping—

*NANCY laughs. GEORGE looks at her.*

NANCY

Oh come on, it's funny, there are tons of trees on this hill, look around!

GEORGE

You're not listening.

NANCY

Sorry. *(Pause.)*

GEORGE

The Great Snake uprooted the trees—

NANCY

All of them— *(Beat.)*

GEORGE

With the force of its back, stripping bare the land, stealing the harvest and swallowing the people, their skulls are at the bottom of the lake.

NANCY

What people?

GEORGE

Your people.

NANCY

Whoa.

GEORGE

You young ones, you just don't know.

NANCY

Know what?

GEORGE

You just don't know.

NANCY

I'll tell you what I don't know, I don't know why you came back. *(Beat.)* You're gone forever, then you come back and tell me this *story*, and that these are my *people*, and that—

NANCY, *Continued*

(*Beat.*) Look, I get that your parents died of alcohol poisoning and you left the reservation for my grandmother—

GEORGE

Stop!

NANCY

(*Almost taunting.*) Okay, fine, *I* think the trees grew back when the white folks came.

GEORGE

Ha!

NANCY

I think the white folks planted gardens and farmed, and now we have vegetables and fruit.

GEORGE

(*Sarcastic.*) Because we never had vegetables and fruit before.

NANCY

The *signpost* says they built roads and hospitals.

GEORGE

(*With irony.*) Yeah, and schools.

NANCY

Yeah, and schools. (*Pause.*)

GEORGE

What are we even doing here?

NANCY

Waiting for the lights.

GEORGE

Why did you bring me here? (*NANCY looks at him, then stands and reads the signpost. He watches her.*) You are so young. (*Pause. NANCY reads the signpost.*) Sit down.

*NANCY still reads, then sits.*

NANCY

By the way, not *all* the people were swallowed. (*Beat.*) The signpost says two children were spared.

GEORGE

It does, does it.

NANCY

Yup. (*Beat.*) Two orphans.

*GEORGE laughs.*

GEORGE

The signpost says that! Well, that's right, the signpost is right! There *were* two orphans, good for the signpost! Two orphans took wood from a tree and—

NANCY

Like mom. (*Pause.*)

GEORGE

Your mother is not an orphan.

NANCY

We should go.

GEORGE

(*Quietly.*) Your mother is *not* an orphan.

*GEORGE is very still.*

NANCY

I brought you here because you looked sad, I wanted to show you they still honor your people. (*Beat.*) We come here a lot, to this hill, and I actually know lots of the stories.

GEORGE

Stories! (*He gestures to the signpost.*) From the Chamber of Commerce?

NANCY

It's something.

GEORGE

So is the dried skin on my foot. (*Silence.*)

NANCY

Why did you leave? I never understood that, why?

GEORGE

I didn't want to. (*Beat.*) I thought your grandmother—

NANCY

Please don't bring her into this.

GEORGE

I thought your *grandmother* would respect—

NANCY

She did.

GEORGE

That's a lie!

NANCY

It's all a lie, isn't it, a hoax, a bedtime story told by the Chamber of Commerce to make us feel soft and gooey.

GEORGE

Your grandmother *baptized* your mother.

NANCY

I said don't bring her into this—

GEORGE

When your mother was born— (*Beat.*) Nancy. (*Beat.*) They're your people too. (*Beat.*) Please. (*She softens. So does he.*) We didn't have much, your grandmother and I, we had a small house, very small, leaks in the roof, I just had left the reservation, and— (*Beat.*) My sisters were angry because I left, but I had your grandmother, and we had our house, it was on top of the hill and we could see the lake when the leaves fell.

NANCY

I—I know that house, I've seen that house.

GEORGE

You have?

NANCY

Grandma showed me, just before she died, she— (*Pause.*) A family lives there now, they don't have any money, it's still falling apart, but I've seen them, the kids with their long black hair playing in the yard, she showed me, I've watched them play, I— (*Beat.*)

GEORGE

She showed you?

NANCY

Just before she died. (*Pause.*)

GEORGE

I loved that house.

NANCY

Me too. (*Beat.*)

GEORGE

I wanted your mother to have something, something from *my* family, so I carved that snake. But your grandmother, “Snakes are evil,” she said.

NANCY

She always said that.

GEORGE

She wagged her finger in my face, “They tempted Eve in the garden.” (*NANCY laughs. He laughs too. Silence. They are very close right now, and very tender.*) She took it away, she— (*Silence.*)

NANCY

*That’s* why you left? (*Beat.*)

GEORGE

I—

NANCY

My mother was three years old. (*She stands.*) You could have made another snake.

GEORGE

That’s not—

**This is Not the End of “Ninety Degrees”**  
**Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**

**PAGE TWENTY-SEVEN**

*CHARACTERS:*        *HANK; 30.*  
                              *ROGER; Hank's older brother.*

SCENE ONE

*AT RISE:*                *HANK and ROGER sit with their gear on  
                                  a rock half-way to the peak of Mount  
                                  Marcy in the Adirondacks.*

HANK

(*Wistfully.*) Morton Tender Quick.

ROGER

What?

HANK

You use too much, if you use too much, you can't—

ROGER

I don't use too much, I don't use any. (*HANK laughs.*) What's wrong with you?

HANK

What's wrong with *you*?

ROGER

Nothing's wrong with—

HANK

*You've* stopped using Morton Tender Quick, that's what!

ROGER

You're ridiculous.

HANK

*I'm* not the one who lives in the best hunting grounds in the country and doesn't eat—

*ROGER stands.*

ROGER

I'm done with this conversation.

HANK

What, you like string beans now? Brussels sprouts?

ROGER

Shut up.

HANK

I hear avocados have lots of nutrients, you growing any up here in the mountains? Nothing like a chick-pea pot-pie! (*ROGER starts walking away.*) Come on, I'm kidding. (*ROGER freezes. Beat. HANK stands too.*) So, shall we?

ROGER

(*He turns to face Hank.*) Not yet.

*Pause. HANK sits, then lies on the ground with his hands folded behind his head.*

HANK

Suit yourself. Morton Tender Quick, rub it into a good, fresh slab of venison, mmmmmm.

*ROGER, still standing, stares at HANK.  
BLACKOUT.*

## SCENE TWO

*AT RISE:*                      *They've climbed higher. HANK has hurt his ankle. ROGER kneels beside him.*

ROGER

How bad is it?

HANK

Bad.

*ROGER opens his backpack and takes out medical tape. He starts to bandage HANK's ankle. HANK grimaces or groans.*

ROGER

This is gonna hurt.

HANK

(*Through his teeth.*) It's okay, thanks man.

*HANK finishes bandaging ROGER's ankle.*

ROGER

That should do it.

*HANK tries to put some weight on his hurt ankle. He winces or moans. They both sit. Silence.*

HANK

I'm sorry.

ROGER

Whatever, some stupid rock, we've all done it.

*Silence. ROGER pauses, then pulls a small, very old manual out of his pocket and hands it to HANK. HANK thumbs through the pages.*

HANK

I can't believe you still have this.

ROGER

He gave it to me, just before he— *(Beat.)*

HANK

Mount Marcy, page twenty-seven. *(He reads.)* "Elevation 5344 feet. Ascent 3166 feet. Difficulty 5. Length of trip 14.8 miles. Typical hike time 10 hours."

ROGER

You sound just like him. *(Beat.)* You're away ten years and if I closed my eyes, that could have been him reading, just like he used to— *(Beat.)*

HANK

You remember when I pranked Aunt Pam? *(ROGER smiles.)* She thought I was dad on the phone, I told her I needed some money, I could have gotten anything I wanted.

ROGER

Of course I remember, I'm the one who got in trouble. *(HANK laughs.)* Somehow, I'm the one who got in trouble, he and I never did— *(Beat.)*

HANK

I know. *(Beat.)*

ROGER

And now he's gone. *(He takes the manual from HANK and puts it in his backpack.)* This is the one, of all forty-six high peaks, this is the one.

HANK

Yeah. (*Beat.*) Number forty-five, though, that was a beast.

ROGER

We were together then, all of us, even mom. (*Pause.*)

HANK

I know you took care of them.

ROGER

That's right.

HANK

Both of them, and of the land.

ROGER

Yeah?

HANK

I know it was hard.

ROGER

You're right, it *was* hard.

HANK

You'll—

ROGER

Mom was real bad, especially at the end.

HANK

I know.

ROGER

And dad, he and I never saw things the same—

HANK

Jesus Roger, you'll get your reward. (*Beat.*)

ROGER

What's that supposed to mean?

HANK

You know.

ROGER

No, tell me. (*Beat.*)

HANK

The will? (*Beat.*) That's what this is all about, isn't it? That's why I'm here—

ROGER

You don't know—

HANK

The reading, it's tomorrow, we both know—

ROGER

I took care of them and I took care of the land because that was the right thing to—

HANK

Exactly, and now you'll get your reward.

*Silence. They hate each other. ROGER softens.*

ROGER

How's your ankle?

HANK

It hurts.

ROGER

I'll look for some wood to make a splint. (*He starts looking for a stick.*) Keep it elevated.

*LIGHTS FADE TO BLACK.*

SCENE THREE

*AT RISE: The light is fading. HANK wears compressed bandages and a makeshift splint. He carries a walking stick. They're on their way down.*

HANK

I can't go any farther.

ROGER

The sun is going down.

I don't care.

HANK

*He sits and props his ankle on a rock to elevate it.*

Great, what are we supposed to do?

ROGER

I don't know, just give me a minute.

HANK

Your ankle is swelling, I can see it from here.

ROGER

I know.

HANK

*ROGER starts pacing.*

It's late, we might not see anyone, I could get down the mountain in a couple hours, maybe less.

ROGER

Roger.

HANK

I could find a ranger station, come back for you.

ROGER

Roger! *(Beat.)*

HANK

What?

ROGER

Stop, just sit for a minute, I'll be okay in a minute. *(Silence. ROGER sits.)* Got anything left to eat? *(ROGER pulls out some carrots and water.)* Carrots, mmm, good for you.

HANK

Shut up Hank.

ROGER

What? *(Silence.)* You're such a child.

HANK

ROGER

Hank—

HANK

Just like when we were kids, always trying to hurt him—

ROGER

You know nothing about this—

HANK

I remember when you shot that deer, not even in season, a doe!

ROGER

She was dying—

HANK

You hypocrite, you kill an animal to make dad mad, then you stop killing animals to make him mad, what's with you? (*Beat.*) You know, the last time I talked to Dad we talked about you.

ROGER

I'm sure you did.

HANK

We fought.

ROGER

What could you and Dad possibly have fought about? He adored you, I'm the one he— (*Silence, a realization.*) You fought about me?

HANK

He told me he was thinking of changing his will. (*ROGER freezes.*) I assumed he'd leave the land to you, you know, because— (*Beat.*) Your reward. (*Silence. They hate each other.*) So I told him— (*ROGER stands and starts pacing.*) Are you listening? I told him that was *fine* with me, that he was better off leaving the land to you, that if he left it to me....

ROGER

Yeah?

HANK

Steph and I—

ROGER

Steph?

*Silence. They hate each other.*

HANK

Yeah, Steph and I had talked it over, if Dad left me the land, we were gonna— *(Beat.)* Never mind.

ROGER

No, what? *(Pause.)*

HANK

We were gonna sell it.

*ROGER laughs.*

ROGER

Of *course* you and Steph were gonna sell it, what else would you do?

HANK

That's right, actually, what else *would* we do? We haven't lived here for ten years, there's nothing for either of us here.

ROGER

Yes, you've both made that perfectly clear.

HANK

What's that supposed to mean?

ROGER

You *could* take care of the land, you could take care of *something* for once in your life. *(Beat.)* Who would you sell it to, you and *Steph*?

HANK

I'm not sure, we talked about—

ROGER

Loggers? Some tourist corporation? *(Beat.)* Who?

HANK

We talked about—

ROGER

Would you sell it to me? *(Pause. ROGER stands right above HANK.)* Well, would you sell it to me?

*Pause. HANK stares up at ROGER.*

HANK

*(Very quiet.)* You couldn't afford it. *(Beat.)* It doesn't matter anyway. *(ROGER freezes, then slowly moves to sit about as far from HANK as he can.)* Okay. Then let's talk about Morton Tender Quick. *(Nothing from ROGER.)* You used to love venison.

ROGER

A lot changes in ten years. *(Pause.)* Ask Steph.

HANK

You rub in the Quick, just the right amount, then cook that meat, simmer it over the fire, let the Quick do its job.

ROGER

Shut up Hank.

HANK

Then you tear into it, you need good strong teeth. *(ROGER stands.)* Venison is delicious if you have good strong teeth.

ROGER

You ready?

HANK

And the juice.... *(Beat.)* Roger. *(Beat.)* I don't think I can move.

*LIGHTS FADE TO BLACK.*

#### SCENE FOUR

*AT RISE:*

*It's dark. HANK leans on ROGER, who carries a flashlight. HANK's pain is intense.*

HANK

Are, are you gonna—

*He can't continue.*

**This is Not the End of “Page Twenty-Seven”**  
**Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**

## GOODBYE

*CHARACTERS:*      *LUCY; Anita's sister, early 30s.*  
*ANITA; late 30s.*  
*DEAD ANITA; like Anita, but grotesque.*  
*TOBIAS; Lucy's husband, early 30s.*

*AT RISE:*              *The stage is split. On one side, ANITA works out [sit-ups, push-ups, weights, etc.] in her basement in Lake Placid. LUCY sits on a suitcase, and TOBIAS stands. On the other side, DEAD ANITA watches from a chair.*

I'm sorry we'll miss the race.

LUCY

It's okay.

ANITA

It's not okay!

DEAD ANITA

I wish you had told us, we would have planned differently, we would have stayed.

LUCY

Lucy....

TOBIAS

(*To TOBIAS.*) I know. (*To ANITA.*) You'll call me? When it's over?

LUCY

Tell them about the crocodile!

DEAD ANITA

Sure.

ANITA

Tell them what you've learned—

DEAD ANITA

Thanks Anita, it was great to see you.

TOBIAS

Yeah, you too.

ANITA

DEAD ANITA

—about your research, where he lives, at the bottom of the lake, tell them about his scales, his eyes, you’ve seen him, you know he’s real, tell them!

LUCY

2.4 miles....

ANITA

Yeah.

DEAD ANITA

Forget the race! The race doesn’t matter!

LUCY

We’re so proud of you, you know, all of us.

TOBIAS

Lucy....

LUCY

*(She gestures to the air.)* And here, of all places!

DEAD ANITA

*(With devastation.)* You’ve *seen* him....

LUCY

There’s so much history, and the mountains, we’ve been here only a weekend and have already climbed two!

ANITA

No high peaks. *(Beat.)*

LUCY

Why do you do that?

DEAD ANITA

You’ve seen him, you’ve let him in, tell them about your plan—

TOBIAS

It’s nothing—Lucy, we have to go.

ANITA

Okay.

DEAD ANITA

It’s not okay!

LUCY

It's not only the mountains, it's also the air, people used to come here just for that cold northern air, sleep on porches, they'd come to heal... (*DEAD ANITA laughs.*) You like it here?

*Pause. DEAD ANITA stares at ANITA.*

ANITA

I do.

DEAD ANITA

Liar!

ANITA

Tell dad I said hi?

LUCY

Why don't you *call* him?

DEAD ANITA

You've let that monster in and he's turning your heart to stone, right under your nose!

ANITA

I call him.

LUCY

When?

ANITA

I've been busy.

DEAD ANITA

And stones fall, they fall like dead weights in the water!

LUCY

(*Sarcastic.*) Training? (*Pause.*)

TOBIAS

Lucy—

LUCY

You're really staying?

DEAD ANITA

You are a *stone*! And you *know*—

ANITA

Of course I'm staying, where would I go? This is where I live.

DEAD ANITA

—you *know* you'll never leave, just like that crocodile, you've planned it, you'll haunt that lake, all alone, your skin turned to green scales, your eyes bulging in the water—

LUCY

You don't have to— (*Beat.*)

DEAD ANITA

(*Whispering, hoarsely.*) You know you'll swim your 2.4 miles, you'll get your medal, then you'll—

*She chokes on her own words.*

ANITA

Everything is fine, I'm happy here.... (*Beat.*) You should go.

*Pause. LUCY stands and picks up the suitcase. DEAD ANITA stands.*

DEAD ANITA

Tell them how you feel! (*She tries to cross into the other playing area but is pushed back into her chair by some unseen force.*) You never tell them how you feel.

LUCY

We don't have to— (*Beat.*)

DEAD ANITA

(*Exhausted, from her chair.*) That's your problem, you swallow it all up, you don't let anyone help, and then....

ANITA

As soon as this is over, I'll call, and I'll visit, maybe I'll even move back.

**This is Not the End of “Goodbye”**  
**Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**

**PART OF YOUR BODY**

CHARACTERS: AVA; 40s.  
JONATHAN; 30s.

*AT RISE:* JONATHAN reads the newspaper while sitting on a bench in Corning Park in Albany at dusk. AVA sits beside him. The streetlamp is lit. AVA looks at her watch.

AVA

They're calling the vote.

JONATHAN

I know.

*AVA shivers. JONATHAN reads.*

AVA

And here we are, sitting in the cold, looking at that building, that same goddamn building.

JONATHAN

You're looking at that building, I'm reading the paper.

AVA

What are you reading? (*Beat.*) Oh.

JONATHAN

It's ridiculous.

AVA

Why?

JONATHAN

I don't know where she gets off. She doesn't work in Albany or even in the industry, she's just—

AVA

A local.

JONATHAN

No, a dumbass.

AVA

A regular person.

JONATHAN

And a liar.

AVA

Jonathan.

JONATHAN

I'm serious. I'm tired of all these "regular people" polluting our conversations—

AVA

With their first-amendment—

JONATHAN

No, with their "opinions."

AVA

You mean with their first-amendment—

JONATHAN

God, Ava, you know what I mean.... (*Beat.*)

AVA

Okay.

*JONATHAN puts down the newspaper.*

JONATHAN

So?

AVA

What?

JONATHAN

Your vote. (*Silence.*) Ava, you can't vote yes, it's crazy.

AVA

You're the one who did the research.

JONATHAN

That's not what I mean.

AVA

You're the one who gave me the numbers, the testimonials.

JONATHAN

You can't win this one Ava.

AVA

So? (*Beat.*) I'm still thinking.

JONATHAN

You vote "yes" and you screw your re-election.

AVA

I know, I said I'm still thinking.

JONATHAN

Fine.

*He stands, restless, and paces. AVA looks towards the building.*

AVA

Do you know the staircase in there?

JONATHAN

Jesus, Ava, we're talking about the vote. (*Pause. JONATHAN sits back down and rubs his temples.*) Go ahead, tell me about the staircase.

AVA

The one with the faces.

JONATHAN

Yeah.

AVA

Someone carved those faces by hand.

JONATHAN

Please get to the point.

AVA

George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln.

JONATHAN

Sure.

AVA

You'd expect those, even Harriet Beecher Stowe and Walt Whitman.

JONATHAN

Ava.

AVA

But the others, did you ever notice? All those other faces, the ones you don't recognize, *those* faces, did you ever— (*She shivers abruptly. Silence. She shivers abruptly again.*) Jonathan.

JONATHAN

What?

AVA

I need to close my eyes. (*JONATHAN covers his face with his hands.*) I can't keep my eyes open, please.

*She closes her eyes. JONATHAN moves closer to AVA. She leans against his shoulder, half-asleep, half-awake. There is tenderness here.*

JONATHAN

Sshhhh...

*Silence. AVA sleeps. JONATHAN gently removes himself from her and starts packing up their papers. He buttons up his coat, looks at her, then starts to walk away. She wakes abruptly. He stops in his tracks. She takes a moment to register her surroundings.*

AVA

Where are you going?

JONATHAN

I'm just stretching my legs.

AVA

Were you leaving? (*Pause. JONATHAN sits back down.*) I used to get those all the time, you know. They're called sleep attacks. (*Pause.*) You *were* leaving, you were gonna leave me. (*Beat.*) So I couldn't vote.

JONATHAN

No.

AVA

I understand.

JONATHAN

They're counting heads.

AVA

I said I understand. *(Pause.)* I used to fall asleep in class, while driving, at the movies, even doing sit-ups at the gym. *(Beat.)* I went to a sleep center just outside the city, they gave me a free sandwich and talked with me about how part of my body *misbehaves*. *(Beat.)* I don't get them as much anymore, the sleep attacks, I don't know why. *(Beat.)* I almost miss them. *(Pause.)*

JONATHAN

*(Gently.)* Come on, let's go inside.

*She doesn't move from the bench.*

AVA

I do miss them. *(Beat.)* They gave me an excuse to cut out, to stop.

JONATHAN

Ava.

AVA

I don't have any excuses now, I move so fast, all day, every day.

JONATHAN

We all move fast.

AVA

I don't know who I am anymore, or where I am. I never see Isabel, she'll be six tomorrow and I can't remember the last time I sat down with her for a meal. I creep into her bedroom every night when I get home, she's already asleep, her little head sunk into the pillow, cheeks so pale, like moonlight.... *(Pause.)*

JONATHAN

You know, when I started working for you, I believed in everything you believe in.

AVA

You don't anymore?

**This is Not the End of "Part of Your Body"**  
**Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**

**LITTLE HANDS**

CHARACTERS: RACHEL; 30s.  
JENNIFER; 30s.  
JANE; 30s.

*AT RISE:* JENNIFER, RACHEL, and JANE drink wine on the patio of a vineyard overlooking Seneca Lake. JANE's glass is empty.

RACHEL

Look at that lake, fucking gorgeous.

JENNIFER

I feel like we're in Switzerland.

RACHEL

*(Teasing.)* What the fuck do you know about Switzerland?

JENNIFER

I've seen pictures! *(Wistfully.)* Some people do this all the time you know.

RACHEL

Yeah, bitches.

*They laugh. They sip their wine.*

JENNIFER

That blue.....

RACHEL

I know.

JENNIFER

Reminds me of Julia's eyes.

*Pause; awkward.*

JANE

Do either of you want another? *(Beat.)*

JENNIFER

I'm fine, thanks Jane.

RACHEL

Yeah, me too.

JANE

I'll be right back.

*JANE takes her empty glass and exits.*

JENNIFER

I shouldn't have said that.

RACHEL

What?

JENNIFER

About Julia.

RACHEL

She needs to deal with it, if she doesn't, he'll—

JENNIFER

I know, but we're supposed to be helping.

RACHEL

We are helping.

JENNIFER

Yeah, by talking about— (*JANE returns with her glass full. Awkward pause.*) What'd you get this time?

JANE

Oh. I thought I'd try the Riesling.

RACHEL

Nice choice.

JANE

Yeah.

*JANE takes a large sip of her wine.*

JENNIFER

How is it?

JANE

It's good.

Good. *(Pause.)*

RACHEL

How is Julia anyway?

JANE

She's great.

JENNIFER

Yeah?

JANE

Jane.

JENNIFER

It's okay, I want to know, I miss seeing her, I've been so busy.

JANE

She misses seeing you, too, and— *(Beat.)*

JANE

*(By now, JANE's glass is empty again.)* I'm gonna get another. Anything for you?

JENNIFER

No thanks. *(JANE exits with her empty glass.)* We should *not* have come here, I don't know what we were thinking.

RACHEL

It's what she wanted.

JENNIFER

Yeah, but—

RACHEL

We thought it would be fun.

JENNIFER

Rachel.

RACHEL

That we could splurge—

JENNIFER

*(Sarcastic.)* Forget for a while?

RACHEL

We never fucking do this. (*Beat.*)

JENNIFER

I know. (*Beat.*)

RACHEL

Fucking stupid.

*JANE returns with her glass full.*

JANE

I thought I'd try the Chardonnay. (*Beat.*) So, what were you guys talking about? (*Beat.*)

JENNIFER

The lake.

JANE

It sure is beautiful. Helps you forget, doesn't it.

RACHEL

Yeah.

JANE

I remember when we used to go the beach at the top of the lake, when Suzie was— (*Beat.*)

JENNIFER

Jane.

JANE

That little beach, you know, you met us there with Julia once? Suzie would dig in the sand, her hands wrapped around a pink plastic shovel, making these perfect little piles, so perfect, such little hands.

RACHEL

Maybe we should go?

JANE

The three of us would swim all day, the water so cool, blue...

*JANE finishes her drink.*

RACHEL

He's an ass, Jane, you're better off.

*RACHEL takes JANE's hand. JANE pulls away and laughs.*

JANE

Maybe without *him*— (*Beat.*) But— (*Beat.*) I work every day and barely make enough for the rent, let alone to— (*Beat.*)

JENNIFER

Jane, honey....

JANE

I'm thinking about getting a second job, maybe selling tickets at the movie theater or—

JENNIFER

Jane.

JANE

What else can I do? (*JENNIFER reaches for JANE.*) I don't know how you hold it all together, Jenny, how you pay your bills and still have time for Julia.

JENNIFER

I—

JANE

How you don't scream or fill your pockets with rocks and walk into the lake.

RACHEL

Jane—

JANE

I'm ready to walk into the lake, I am. (*Beat.*)

JENNIFER

I have both of you. (*Beat.*)

JANE

All those blues swirling like birds over my head. (*Beat.*) I can't do it.

**This is Not the End of "Little Hands"**  
**Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**

**WAR/BATHTUB**

*CHARACTERS:*        *AMINA; 8.*  
                              *SIMONE; 20s, Amina's mom.*

*AT RISE:*                *AMINA is taking a bath in the apartment where she and SIMONE live in Syracuse, New York. SIMONE reads a magazine.*

AMINA

Mama, the Humboldt penguins are from South America, did you know that? I learned that at the library, Ms. Hennedy let us look for books and I found a book about penguins. (*Pause.*) What are you reading?

SIMONE

Nothing, honey, I'm not reading anything.

*Beat. SIMONE puts down her magazine.*

AMINA

Okay. (*Beat.*) I didn't know what "Humboldt" meant, I thought it might be the name of a person, maybe the person who found the penguins or discovered them or something, but it's not, it's the name of a current, a very strong current, it runs all the way from Antarctica, you know, where it's really cold and where most other penguins live, like Emperor penguins, and the current goes all the way from Antarctica to the Equator!

SIMONE

How do you know these things?

AMINA

I learned that at the library too. (*SIMONE touches AMINA in some gentle way.*) Lisa was there, at the library.

SIMONE

She was?

AMINA

She was. I'm so excited, Mama, I've wanted to go to the zoo since, for as long as I can remember, and I'm going, I'm going tomorrow.

SIMONE

I know.

AMINA

To the zoo...

*SIMONE pours water over AMINA's hair.*

What was Lisa doing at the library?  
SIMONE

Why?  
AMINA

Well, that's not really part of her—  
SIMONE

I told her our group was going.  
AMINA

I wish you wouldn't have done that.  
SIMONE

Why? (*Beat.*)  
AMINA

I just wish you wouldn't have done that.  
SIMONE

AMINA  
She showed me the book about penguins. She knows I love penguins. Ms. Hennedy didn't want us talking, because we were in the library, but I think it was okay.

SIMONE  
I'm sure it was okay.

*SIMONE rubs shampoo into AMINA's hair.*

AMINA  
Ms. Hennedy is always so mean. She doesn't like us very much, she treats us differently, I think because we're poor.

SIMONE  
That's not true, why would you think that?

AMINA  
I don't know. Lisa talked to her for a little while, before she showed me the book about penguins, and she was so mad, Lisa was so mad, and I asked her what was wrong and she told me that Ms. Hennedy made her mad.

SIMONE  
Well, that doesn't mean that Ms. Hennedy doesn't like you.

AMINA

I guess. (*SIMONE rinses AMINA's hair.*) But Ms. Hennedy is always so mean to us, she's always so careful and she doesn't even really look at us, and Lisa said— (*Pause.*) I can't wait to see the penguins. Penguins are really social animals, they do this thing called a "display," where they show how they're feeling or what they need, but the Humboldt penguins are really shy, they have a harder time showing other penguins what's on their minds. And you're not gonna believe this— (*Beat.*)

**This is Not the End of "War/Bathtub"**  
**Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**

**AS LITTLE CONSCIOUS THOUGHT AS POSSIBLE**

*CHARACTERS:*        *JEROME*  
                              *MAGGIE; Jerome's ex-wife*

*AT RISE:*                *JEROME and MAGGIE stand in separate parts of the stage, each lit separately. The sound of waves and wind. They are in the Cupsogue of their respective memories.*

MAGGIE

It was cold, January. I remember the wind clipping the backs of our necks.

JEROME

Months had passed.

MAGGIE

We parked before the frozen sand got too treacherous, then climbed over the fence down the dunes, not on the ocean side, by the inlet, towards the bay, holding onto each other.

JEROME

This time I drove by myself with the windows open and parked in the lot, I could feel the sun rising from the pavement, I tried not to remember— (*Beat.*)

MAGGIE

I stumbled a little near the bottom, maybe a rock or clump of rotted wood. Jerome stopped and waited for me.

JEROME

But I did remember, so I stood at the top of the dunes, by the fence, and looked before going down.

MAGGIE

I watched his face while he waited. Soft, not like the wind.

JEROME

I didn't want— (*Beat.*)

MAGGIE

I took his hand and we hiked through dead cattails, water seeping over the bottoms of our boots. It was hard to look straight ahead, the sun was bright and the wind...

JEROME

Not this time.

MAGGIE

But we looked anyway. We shielded our eyes and scanned the sandbars, and there they were, an entire herd!

JEROME

The sun warmed my face while I looked in the distance.

MAGGIE

I saw them first, I let out a whoop. (*She whoops, then silence.*) I felt something giant rise inside me.

JEROME

I tried not to think about— (*Beat.*)

MAGGIE

(*She touches her belly*) Like I had touched the universe. Jerome whooped too and the two of us started running, we couldn't wait.

JEROME

I tried— (*Beat.*)

MAGGIE

When we got closer, we paused for a moment to catch our breath, then looked again, shielding our eyes against the sun, against the wind. They were right there, so close, so still.

JEROME

Then, in the distance, something moved.

MAGGIE

(*A shift. She removes her hand from her belly.*) Too still.

JEROME

On the sandbars.

MAGGIE

I let go of his hand, I opened my fingers and his hand dropped like a stone.

JEROME

And in the water. Twenty of them.

MAGGIE

There were piles of *stones* in the water.

JEROME

Thirty of them.

MAGGIE

Small black stones, cold and dead, jutting from the sandbars, glistening in the sun like, like a herd of wet seals.

JEROME

Maybe forty, on the sandbar, in the water. They swam closer to me. (*He makes some gesture.*) I could see their faces.

**This is Not the End of “As Little Conscious Thought As Possible”**  
**Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**

**KINK**

*CHARACTERS:*      *KATIE; late teens.*  
                                 *JIM; late teens.*

*AT RISE:*              *KATIE and JIM lean over a bar that separates them from the cracked 200-inch mirror-blank housed at the Corning Museum of Glass.*

JIM

The *LA Times* called this the biggest event in science.

KATIE

This?

JIM

Bigger than the atomic bomb.

KATIE

Are you serious?

JIM

Well, not *this*, the real one, the one without the crack.

KATIE

Bigger than the bomb?

JIM

Yeah.

KATIE

It's a mirror, Jim, in a glass museum.

JIM

It's called a "mirror-blank," the one without the crack is the largest piece of glass ever made.  
(*Pause.*)

KATIE

Do you remember sixth grade?

JIM

A little.

KATIE

I built a camera out of a cardboard box for my science project, cut a square in the front, covered the square with tin foil, then pricked this teeny hole in the— *(Beat.)* I remember I took a picture of my dog out in the yard, by my dad's shed, it was tricky because I needed to hold open the shutter for three seconds, and the dog couldn't move that whole time or the picture would be blurry.

JIM

Okay.

KATIE

I used to love this stuff.

JIM

How did it work, the science? *(Beat.)*

KATIE

I don't remember. *(Beat.)* But I took the paper out of the box and went into the bathroom and stirred the paper in some chemicals, then hung it on a wire to dry.

JIM

Did you win?

KATIE

No, I got the chicken pox and had to stay home. *(JIM reaches out to her. She pulls away.)* Whatever.

JIM

What about seventh grade?

KATIE

I probably gave up.

JIM

*(Pause. Gesturing to the mirror-blank.)* You know, even when that one cracked, he kept going, he annealed it—

KATIE

He what?

JIM

Annealed it. Cooled it. Just to see what would happen, to learn more about how glass worked.

KATIE

Must be nice. *(Beat.)*

JIM

Katie.

KATIE

What? (*Beat.*) Must be nice. To fuck up like that, then “anneal” it, just to see what would happen. (*Beat.*) To look in the mirror and see a giant crack and then just “learn” from your mistake, just like that, must be nice.

JIM

Should we leave?

KATIE

After the science fair, you know, I didn't *really* give up. I went to the library and took out seven books about photography. I devoured those books. I couldn't wait to study physics in high school, I wanted to understand the way light moved.

JIM

I remember.

KATIE

You do?

JIM

The first time I noticed you was in physics lab. Mr. Oliver blasted that laser beam around the room and we all ducked our heads because we thought the light would blind us, but not you, you stared right at him, you were so— (*Beat.*)

KATIE

What?

JIM

Brave. (*Pause.*)

KATIE

Physics lab, what a joke.

JIM

Don't say that.

KATIE

What am I ever gonna do with physics lab?

JIM

I don't know, go to college? (*Pause, awkward.*) I don't know.

KATIE

What then? This guy? He fucked up with the first one, cracked the mirror, then built the “real” one and moved around the world, designing glass? (*Beat.*)

JIM

Yeah. (*Beat.*)

KATIE

And now the whole world is made of glass.

JIM

Katie.

KATIE

Optical fiber. Tiny cylinders of glass connecting the world, tiny cylinders no bigger than a human hair.

JIM

You know so much, you’re so—

KATIE

Connecting my mom’s cellphone to the school smartboard to Afghanistan to Libya to the fucking thing growing in my— (*Pause.*)

**This is Not the End of “Kink”**  
**Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**



JACKSON  
By your question about Elizabeth.

JOHN  
Don't be ridiculous.

JACKSON  
I'm not.

JOHN  
Sarah saw Elizabeth at the club. She thought Elizabeth seemed tired. That's all.

JACKSON  
That's none of Sarah's business.

JOHN  
(*He stands.*) Now wait a minute.

JACKSON  
(*He waves JOHN back into his seat.*) Settle down, I'm sorry. (*Beat.*) We came here to talk about business. (*Beat.*)

JOHN  
We did.

JACKSON  
How are things at the office? (*Beat.*)

JOHN  
Slow.

JACKSON  
No one's buying insurance?

JOHN  
It's 1928, no one's thinking about the future.

JACKSON  
Why not?

JOHN  
No one believes this will end.

JACKSON  
Will it? (*Beat.*) Tell me, why should I invest in your insurance? Why should I spend extra money to protect my speculations when my dividends grow every year?

JOHN

That's exactly what—

JACKSON

You say no one is thinking about the future, I say this *is* the future.

JOHN

This is *not* the future.

JACKSON

Then what is it? (*Beat.*)

JOHN

Ask Elizabeth.

JACKSON

(*He stands.*) What right do you have, or Sarah, to bring my wife into—

JOHN

That's not it.

JACKSON

Then what?

*He looks around, then sits.*

JOHN

They're friends, they, talk to each other.

JACKSON

Don't you dare—

JOHN

They talk about their lives, I'm telling you to ask Elizabeth. (*Beat.*) Ask her what this is, this place, this time that we live in.

JACKSON

You've done this since I've known you.

JOHN

Done what?

JACKSON

Judged me.

That's ridiculous. JOHN

Is it? (*Beat.*) JACKSON

I thought we were talking about business. (*Beat.*) JOHN

We were, we are. JACKSON

Then let's talk about business. JOHN

*Pause. The blues play. HUGH approaches the table.*

Can I get you anything else, sirs? (*Beat.*) HUGH

What do you say, John? Another? (*Beat.*) JACKSON

Fine. JOHN

*HUGH nods, exits. The blues play.*

Coming from a black man's soul. JACKSON

*Pause. The blues play.*

How is Elizabeth. JOHN

*Pause. The blues play.*

Tired. JACKSON

*They laugh. HUGH returns with their drinks.*

HUGH

Anything else, sirs?

JACKSON

That will be all. Thank you. (*HUGH turns to leave.*) One moment, young man. (*HUGH returns to the table.*) Do you know the name of this song?

HUGH

It's called "The Weary Blues," sir.

JACKSON

"The Weary Blues." Yes. I can tell.

JOHN

How can you tell?

JACKSON

I suppose they do all sound the same, I suppose they all could be called "The Weary Blues." What do you think, young man?

HUGH

I suppose so, sir.

*JACKSON laughs.*

JACKSON

Good boy. Thank you. That will be all. (*HUGH exits. The blues play.*) Elizabeth is tired. She's been tired. (*Beat.*) Is Sarah tired?

JOHN

She's not.

JACKSON

I don't know what to do. (*Beat.*) She wanders through the parlor like a spirit. She doesn't eat, not with me anyway. I don't know if she sleeps. She stays in her room all night and doesn't like when I step in, even just for a moment, with fresh flowers or her calling cards, let alone.... (*The blues play.*) Listen to that tune.

JOHN

I'll have Sarah talk to her.

JACKSON

Would you? Thank you, John.

JOHN

Anytime. (*The blues play.*) Listen, Jackson, I've got to get going, early day tomorrow.

JACKSON

I thought things were slow?

JOHN

They are, that's why tomorrow's an early day.

JACKSON

Time to figure out a battle plan?

JOHN

We've been watching the market.

JACKSON

Yes, we have too.

JOHN

We think we know how to convince investors that it's prudent to—

.

**This is Not the End of “Voyeurism”**  
**Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**

**STEAL**

**CHARACTERS:**     *PETER; 30s.*  
                          *MARCUS; 30s.*  
                          *EARNEST; 30s.*

**AT RISE:**           *The stage is split. On one side, PETER types UAW notes for a Local 425 meeting in Buffalo in 1941. On the other side, MARCUS and EARNEST smoke cigarettes outside the Buffalo Stamping Plant in 2011.*

**PETER**

“For immediate release, June 1941....” (*He thinks.*)

**MARCUS**

You just started, you don’t know yet.

**EARNEST**

Know what?

**MARCUS**

What happens. (*They smoke.*)

**PETER**

“The United Auto Workers Local 425 invites all auto workers to its first meeting....” (*He thinks.*)

**EARNEST**

What do you mean, “what happens,” what’s that supposed to mean?

**MARCUS**

When the shit hits. (*They smoke.*)

**PETER**

“...outside the assembly plant in Buffalo, New York.”

*He leans back and looks at the ceiling.*

**MARCUS**

And the shit is going to hit. Did you see the release?

**EARNEST**

Yeah, so?

MARCUS

No one's buying those big cars anymore.

EARNEST

That's not our fault. (*They smoke.*)

PETER

"We demand a thirty-hour week, we demand any extra hours be divided among the unemployed for whom we advocate, we demand the end to egregious assembly-line speed-up...." (*He thinks.*)

MARCUS

The shit is going to hit, and there's nothing you can do about it.

EARNEST

Nothing *I* can do about it?

MARCUS

You're on your own for this one.

EARNEST

What's that supposed to mean? (*They smoke.*)

PETER

"....we demand minimum pay rates, we demand union recognition...." (*He thinks.*)

MARCUS

They're going to lay *you* off, you're new.

EARNEST

They can't.

MARCUS

They can, and they will. (*They smoke.*)

PETER

"Together, we can ensure our conditions are fair and safe...." (*He thinks.*)

**This is Not the End of "Steal"**  
**Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**

**RIP VAN WINKLE**

**CHARACTERS:**        *RIP VAN WINKLE.*  
                              *DAME VAN WINKLE; his wife.*  
                              *RIP JUNIOR; his son.*  
                              *NICHOLAS VEDDER; owner of the local*  
                              *pub.*  
                              *THE GHOSTS OF HENRY HUDSON'S*  
                              *CREW.*

**SETTING:**            *In a small town near the Hudson River.*

**SCENE ONE**

**AT RISE:**            *Fiddle music plays. THE GHOSTS OF*  
                              *HENRY HUDSON'S CREW watch as*  
                              *RIP VAN WINKLE enters a 1970s*  
                              *kitchen carrying a cup of coffee, DAME*  
                              *VAN WINKLE on his heels. The fiddle*  
                              *music fades.*

**DAME VAN WINKLE**

I don't see why you can't get work.

**RIP VAN WINKLE**

I have work.

**DAME VAN WINKLE**

I mean over the summer.

**RIP VAN WINKLE**

I work over the summer.

**DAME VAN WINKLE**

Bullshit.

**RIP VAN WINKLE**

The school-year is tough, I use summers to heal, that's my work.

**DAME VAN WINKLE**

Take a week to heal and to play, then get a job. Rip Junior needs the money.

**RIP VAN WINKLE**

*(He looks at his cup of coffee.)* There's more to this life than—

DAME VAN WINKLE

Ha!

RIP VAN WINKLE

I need time to put myself back together again, and we need time to read, to think, to—

DAME VAN WINKLE

Time to be lazy you mean, when the roof is leaking and Rip Junior has no college fund.

*RIP VAN WINKLE finishes drinking his coffee. He sets the empty cup on the table.*

RIP VAN WINKLE

I'm going for a walk.

DAME VAN WINKLE

While you're looking at the trees, why don't you "think" a little about your responsibility to Rip Junior. Your salary is peanuts, Rip, and without money your son will not have a future.

*Fiddle music plays as DAME VAN WINKLE takes the empty cup and exits.*

## SCENE TWO

*AT RISE:*

*THE GHOSTS OF HENRY HUDSON'S CREW move the table and turn into trees. RIP VAN WINKLE walks through the trees, his hands in his pockets. Fiddle music fades as RIP VAN WINKLE whistles a little, maybe to the same tune the fiddle just played.*

RIP VAN WINKLE

Responsibility to Rip Junior, I know my responsibility, but— *(Beat. He stops walking. He continues walking.)* But my responsibility also is to— *(He touches one of the trees.)* Your branches bend with the wind, that's what I need to do, bend with the wind.

GHOSTS

Bend with the wind.... The wind....

RIP VAN WINKLE

Huh, an echo in the forest, who would have thought? *(He sits and leans against the tree.)* Everyone moves so fast, even me, it's time to stop and listen....

## GHOSTS

Listen....

### RIP VAN WINKLE

And now— (*He removes a pipe and prepares to smoke. One of the GHOSTS takes the form of a man.*) Oh, hello. (*The GHOST nods.*) I'm rebelling against society. Would you care to join me? (*The GHOST sits. Silence.*) Where are you from? (*Pause.*) That's okay, we can be quiet. (*RIP VAN WINKLE offers his pipe to the GHOST. The GHOST accepts.*) Not many people smoke pipes anymore, I'm impressed. (*The GHOST reaches into his pocket and removes a pouch of tobacco.*) Oh. (*The GHOST fills the pipe barrel. Fiddle music begins.*) Wow. (*RIP VAN WINKLE smells the tobacco.*) Thanks. (*He hears the fiddle music.*) Do you hear something? It sounds like music....

*RIP VAN WINKLE smokes the pipe.  
Fiddle music continues as the trees move slowly towards RIP VAN WINKLE, as if cooing or singing him a lullaby, until RIP VAN WINKLE falls into a deep sleep.  
Then, THE GHOSTS exit the stage.  
Magic.*

## SCENE THREE

*AT RISE: RIP VAN WINKLE wakes. The fiddle music fades. RIP VAN WINKLE stands quickly. He has aged; his body isn't as deft as it used to be. Stooped, he looks around. He heads in one direction, stops, is confused, heads in a different direction, then exits. Fiddle music begins when the stage is empty.*

## SCENE FOUR

*AT RISE: RIP JUNIOR drinks at a bar. THE GHOSTS are frozen into various poses around the stage, as if they had been customers years ago. NICHOLAS VEDDER enters, wiping a mug clean. He sees RIP JUNIOR. Fiddle music fades.*

### NICHOLAS

Hey.

### RIP JUNIOR

Hey. (*Pause.*)

NICHOLAS

You should go home.

RIP JUNIOR

Get me another.

*Silence. NICHOLAS pours another drink and gives it to RIP JUNIOR. RIP VAN WINKLE dashes into the bar.*

NICHOLAS

Whoa. You okay old man?

RIP VAN WINKLE

I—I—the phone, the phone outside, it's falling apart, I—I wonder, could I borrow the phone here?

NICHOLAS

Sure.

*He hands RIP VAN WINKLE his cellphone. RIP VAN WINKLE stares at the cellphone. He's not sure what to do with it. He hands it back to NICHOLAS.*

RIP VAN WINKLE

I don't understand. I don't know—I don't understand where I am.

NICHOLAS

Easy old man. Take a seat. (*RIP VAN WINKLE sits.*) You're in Tarrytown, just north of the city. Can I get you a drink?

RIP VAN WINKLE

Yes, Tarrytown. Yes, a drink, please. (*NICHOLAS pours RIP VAN WINKLE something stiff.*) Thank you. (*RIP VAN WINKLE drinks. His hands shake a bit.*) Where—where is the library?

NICHOLAS

The library? What library? Oh, you mean the old library that used to be on North Broadway. They shut that down years ago. No more use value. Very sad.... You from around here? (*Silence.*) Okay....

RIP VAN WINKLE

The—the school? The high school?

NICHOLAS

Yeah, they shut that down too. Where have you been old man? Asleep for a hundred years? Things are more “efficient” now. Kids learn on their computers, take their tests, then compete in the workforce. (*NICHOLAS laughs.*) Except me, of course. And Rip Junior here. (*RIP VAN WINKLE freezes, gets it, then slowly turns to look at his son.*) Rip Junior still reads books. Right Rip? He’s got a pile of old books in his old home, falling apart, roof leaking since his daddy disappeared fifty years ago, but he’s got his books and he—

RIP JUNIOR

And I’m not giving them up.

NICHOLAS

And me?

RIP JUNIOR

Another?

*NICHOLAS gives RIP JUNIOR a look,  
then pours his drink.*

NICHOLAS

Me? I serve a barroom of ghosts. (*He hands RIP JUNIOR his drink, then leans on the bar and looks at RIP JUNIOR.*) Not much profit, but it does the spirit good.

*RIP JUNIOR sips, then takes out a pipe.  
RIP VAN WINKLE stares at him.*

RIP JUNIOR

I’m going outside to smoke, old man. Would you care to join me?

**This is Not the End of “Rip Van Winkle”**  
**Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**

## IT GETS YOU

*CHARACTERS:*        *CHORUS; corporate leaders*  
*“disguised” as farmers. [May use farm*  
*implements alternatively as weapons*  
*and/or instruments.]*  
*MARTHA; 40s.*  
*JENNIFER; 20s.*

*AT RISE:*            *MARTHA is selling vegetables at the*  
*Ithaca Farmers Market. The CHORUS is*  
*lit separately, anti-naturalistically,*  
*perhaps even horrifically.*

### CHORUS

We never would poison the people,  
We do what we can to be good.  
We’ve bought up the land and grown lots of corn,  
Please won’t you buy our food?

*JENNIFER walks to MARTHA’s stand.*  
*She fingers some vegetables.*

“What is the source of our sickness?”  
Consumers have asked on the news.  
But we never would poison the people,  
We have too much money to lose.

### JENNIFER

What are these?

### MARTHA

Green onions.

### JENNIFER

Oh, how much are they?

### MARTHA

A bundle for one dollar.

### CHORUS

So what is the source of their sickness  
If it isn’t the food in our cans?  
Why are they coughing and clutching their chests  
And seeing their doctors again?

I like green onions. JENNIFER

CHORUS  
The market,  
The market.

What about these? JENNIFER

Those are one dollar apiece. MARTHA

What are they? JENNIFER

Zucchini squash. MARTHA

I thought they might be cucumbers. JENNIFER

(*She smiles.*) They look like cucumbers. MARTHA

CHORUS  
We never would poison the people,  
We care what all of you eat.  
We want you to load up on this and on that  
And buy whatever is cheap.

I've never made anything with zucchini squash, what do you do? JENNIFER

I like to sauté it with pasta or grill it over burgers, my little girl likes hers cubed and— MARTHA

You have a little girl? JENNIFER

(*She smiles.*) She's seven. MARTHA

She's seven and eats zucchini squash. (*Beat. A moment.*) Do you have any tomatoes? JENNIFER

MARTHA

Right here.

*She points to a bucket of tomatoes in front of JENNIFER. JENNIFER starts picking through the bucket.*

CHORUS

We never would poison the people,  
We know that would ruin your meal.  
But we have to do something to slash prices down  
So you think that you're getting a deal.

JENNIFER

*(Stealing a glance.)* You look familiar.

MARTHA

*(She laughs.)* Lots of people say that.

JENNIFER

Did you grow up in town?

MARTHA

I moved here ten years ago, met my husband about fifteen yards in that direction and—  
*(Beat.)*

CHORUS

We never would poison the people,  
But none of us get what we give,  
And we're all of us caught in the system,  
And we have to make money to live.

JENNIFER

—and now you're a farmer's wife.

MARTHA

*(Smiling.)* I own the farm.

CHORUS

The market,  
The market,  
The produce market.  
We have to make money to live.

MARTHA

Go ahead, try one. (*JENNIFER picks up a small tomato, hesitates.*) We don't use pesticides and we rotate our crops regularly. (*Beat.*) Do you live in town?

CHORUS

We plant and we harvest,  
We package and sell.

JENNIFER

I came up with friends, we wanted to spend time outside, get healthy, get back in touch with things.

MARTHA

Lots of people come for that.

JENNIFER

Is that why you came?

MARTHA

I visited with friends, like you, we lived in the city and wanted to hike, we found all these waterfalls.

JENNIFER

We saw a waterfall, that big one, right off the main road.

MARTHA

That's where we swam.

JENNIFER

In the swimming hole, we saw that.

MARTHA

Anyway, something changed, I don't know, inside me. (*Beat.*)

JENNIFER

What? (*Beat.*)

MARTHA

I breathed.

*They laugh.*

CHORUS

We plant and we process,  
We sell and you buy.

JENNIFER

We hiked this morning, my friends and I, brought some apples with us and sat on a stone, I had never just sat on a stone before. We took off our shoes and waded in a stream and looked at the sky. Everything felt different, good, we didn't even talk but I knew they were there, then we walked through town and I thought I could start a life here, slow down, grow things.

CHORUS

We have to make money to live.

JENNIFER

*(She puts down the tomato.)* But I have to get back to work, you know, the real world.

MARTHA

The real world?

CHORUS

And nobody eats from the earth anymore,  
Everyone eats from a box.  
You cram yourselves full with all of the junk  
That we load onto very large trucks.

JENNIFER

*(She laughs.)* Yeah, where people only read about zucchini squash. *(Beat.)* I don't know how you survive.

MARTHA

*(She smiles.)* I could say the same.

JENNIFER

How do you make money?

MARTHA

I make enough.

JENNIFER

Yeah, but— *(Beat.)*

CHORUS

We never would poison the people  
At least not on purpose you see.  
And we're thankful for all of our options,  
And that all of our markets are free.

JENNIFER

You know, my grandparents had a farm, a duck farm.

MARTHA

Really?

JENNIFER

Yeah, my grandfather used to tell stories about the Polish women who picked the ducks and about the whole cutting-them-open process, they did that, themselves, and the milk cow that died, and they buried it in a hole, my grandfather and his wife. They didn't grow vegetables, but he was still connected, you know? (*Beat.*) They had to sell the farm, I never saw it, only heard the stories.

**This is Not the End of "It Gets You"**  
**Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**

**PUTTING OFF**

*CHARACTERS:*        *HANNAH; 70s.*  
                              *JOHN; 70s.*

*AT RISE:*                *HANNAH lies in bed in her home in Seneca Falls. JOHN sits on a chair. It's the beginning of the twentieth century. The room is dark.*

HANNAH

I'm not ready John.

JOHN

Sshhh.

HANNAH

No, I'm not ready. (*Silence.*) Will you open the drapes? (*JOHN opens the drapes. Sunlight pours into the room.*) That's better. (*Silence.*) When we were children, do you remember?

JOHN

Sshhh.

HANNAH

No, when we were children, maybe ten years old, your father owned the butcher shop on Fall Street, we'd make fun of you and your brothers, you always smelled of blood, but your house was grand, I was sweet on you. (*JOHN takes her hand.*) And your father hung those posters in the window, he was so angry, those women.

JOHN

Sshhh.

HANNAH

No, those women, they stood on the corner, some men too, a sort of parade, not many of them, but they were fierce, do you remember?

JOHN

Hannah, you need your rest. The doctor said—

HANNAH

I know what the doctor said. (*Silence.*) They were fierce. I was ten, but I remember them, they stood on that corner and marched to the church, the chapel, and the notice they placed in the *Courier*.

JOHN

Please, Hannah.

HANNAH

Let me finish. (*Silence.*) It got bad then, the other papers responded, “If our ladies will insist on voting and legislating, where, gentlemen, will be our dinners and our elbows? Where our domestic firesides and the holes in our stockings?”\* I remember every word.

JOHN

Sshhh.

HANNAH

Do you remember? Your father, he looked at my mother on Tuesdays when she bought her meat, “you’d better mind your own,” he’d say. Do you remember any of that? (*Silence.*) My fingers trembled when he said that, every single Tuesday, I knew something... great was happening.

JOHN

Hannah, please. (*Silence.*)

HANNAH

But I did nothing. I was little, I know there’s not much I could have done then, but I did nothing afterwards, and time marched on, and history marched on, and now it’s just about to happen, the War is just about over and it’s going to happen, I can feel it, but I won’t be there, John.

JOHN

Hannah, please, the doctor.

**This is Not the End of “Putting Off”**  
**Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**

\* From *The Oneida Whig*, according to “Seneca Falls Convention”

**SEXY DECOY**

**CHARACTERS:**        *PATRICK; 20s, Irish immigrant.*  
                              *MARANNE; 20s, Irish immigrant.*

Failing to fetch me at first keep encouraged,  
Missing me one place search another,  
I stop somewhere waiting for you.

—Walt Whitman, *Song of Myself*

**AT RISE:**                *PATRICK fishes in the Niagara River.*  
                              *MARANNE sits in the shade and reads a*  
                              *book of poetry. The Erie Canal has just*  
                              *been completed.*

MARANNE

*(She reads. She's a good reader.)* "Is this then a touch? quivering me to a new identity, /  
Flames and ether making a rush for my veins, / Treacherous tip of me reaching out and  
crowding to help them, / My flesh and blood playing out lightning to strike what is hardly  
different from myself—"

PATRICK

You'd better stop that.

MARANNE

Why?

PATRICK

You know why.

MARANNE

*(Flirting.)* You're crazy! *(Beat.)*

PATRICK

Okay. Keep going.

MARANNE

"On all sides prurient provokers stiffening my limbs—"

PATRICK

I like that. Read it again.

MARANNE

"On all sides—"

No, the end.

PATRICK

“Stiffening my limbs?”

MARANNE

Yes, I like that. (*MARANNE laughs. She reads to herself.*) I like when...

PATRICK

(*Flirting.*) When what? (*Pause, a shift.*)

MARANNE

Maranne, we finished. (*Pause.*)

PATRICK

I know.

MARANNE

You know?

PATRICK

Everyone knows.

MARANNE

I didn’t want to tell you.

PATRICK

But *this* is your home, Patrick, now it is.

MARANNE

Last week, three men followed me to the camp.

PATRICK

There’s trouble everywhere.

MARANNE

They imitated my voice, Maranne, “Look at the Mick,” they said, “climbing out of his dung, taking our—” Then they stopped, all three of them, stopped in my path and rolled up their shirtsleeves and their eyes got dark.

PATRICK

Patrick.

MARANNE

The foreman asked them to leave.

PATRICK

MARANNE

Good.

PATRICK

But then he looked at me too, like I was some sort of— (*Beat.*) This is *not* my home. I did my job, I dug that canal for fourteen months, I collected my pay yesterday, I'm going back. (*Pause.*)

MARANNE

I miss it too.

PATRICK

I know.

MARANNE

The hills and—

PATRICK

—the cold, gray sea. (*Beat.*)

MARANNE

My brothers. (*Beat.*) But we made it, Patrick, we made it to the end of the world.

PATRICK

So it seemed.

MARANNE

A promise kept. (*She's closer to him now, maybe playing with his fishing pole.*) Home. (*Pause.*)

PATRICK

Maranne—

MARANNE

Are you going to catch anything? (*PATRICK reels in his line. He smiles.*) I'm hungry. What did you put on your line?

PATRICK

It's a lure, a decoy.

MARANNE

A decoy?

PATRICK

Like duck hunters use. They build wooden ducks and float them down the river so real ducks think it's safe. I carve wooden fish, I attach them to my line, I try to trick the real fish.

MARANNE

Can I see one? (*He shows her his decoy. She traces its lines with her fingers. This is very sensual. He watches her.*) “Straining the udder of my heart for its withheld drip, / Behaving licentious toward me, taking no denial, / Depriving me of my best as for a purpose, / Unbuttoning my clothes, holding me by the bare waist, / Deluding my confusion with the calm of the sunlight and pasture-fields—”

PATRICK

You’ve got all that in your head?

MARANNE

And more.

PATRICK

(*He can barely talk.*) Tell me.

MARANNE

“Immodestly sliding the fellow-senses away, / They bribed to swap off with touch and go and graze at the edges of me—”

PATRICK

Stop. (*Pause. She’s still touching his decoy. He takes it from her and wipes his brow.*) It’s hot.

MARANNE

There’ll be a storm tonight.

PATRICK

Do you remember that last storm?

MARANNE

Which one?

PATRICK

We’d finished digging for the day, were drinking and playing cards, knew we’d feel it in the morning, and then— (*Beat.*)

MARANNE

And then?

PATRICK

All that rain, coming from out west, over the lake, over the river, God raging on our bodies. (*She puts her hand on him.*)

MARANNE

A promise.

PATRICK

Tell me more.

**This is Not the End of “Sexy Decoy”**  
**Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**

**THE NEXT THING**

After Eugene O'Neill's *Before Breakfast*

**CHARACTERS:**        *JOSEPHINE; 50s.*  
                              *ANTHONY; 50s.*

**AT RISE:**                *JOSEPHINE towel-dries two fragile cups and saucers in an apartment in Brooklyn in the 1950s. ANTHONY is off-stage, shaving in the bathroom, with the door open.*

**ANTHONY**

You having an egg? Then I'll have an egg.

*JOSEPHINE sets down the cups and cracks an egg into a bowl. NOTE: Throughout the play, ANTHONY might hum or even sing, at intervals.*

*ANTHONY, Continued*

I like my eggs, you make a good egg Josephine, you've always made a good egg. (*Beat.*) Anthony always loved your eggs too, used to tell me he loved when you fried your eggs and when you scrambled them, you make a good scrambled egg Josephine, and when you made those frittatas on Sundays. Anthony always loved your eggs. Still loves your eggs, I'm sure, if he'd ever come and visit. Ungrateful son of a bitch.

*JOSEPHINE adds salt and/or pepper and/or milk and whisks the egg.*

*ANTHONY, Continued*

Leaving to work for Mr. Garpone. Mr. Garpone! Ow! (*ANTHONY has cut himself.*) Goddamn son of a bitch, cut myself again. Josephine, get me a napkin?

*JOSEPHINE gets a napkin and gives it to ANTHONY, who is still in the bathroom.*

*ANTHONY, Continued*

Thanks.

*She crosses back to the egg and continues whisking, by rote.*

ANTHONY, *Continued*

You look good today. You always look good in the morning. Not like when you were twenty but good. (*Beat.*) So what are you doing today? You going to the dressmaker? Do a little work for her? Or you going to your mother's? She'll complain to you about me again you know. "That Anthony," she'll say. "That Anthony, he's the reason your boy left." What does she know, the fat cow. Can't even speak English. Got off the boat two years ago and can't even speak English. She'll say all that in Italiano. It's 1953, Brooklyn's gonna win the pennant, and she's speaking Italiano complaining about me. Ha! She should be complaining about Mr. Garpone. Mr. Garpone who steals her grandson and ships him out to Commack to pour concrete when he could be here with us. Next thing you know she'll be baking pignoli cookies for Mr. Garpone and praying novenas.

*JOSEPHINE sets the cups into the saucers and pours coffee from a pot into one of the cups, then stands still.*

ANTHONY, *Continued*

Praying her novenas for Mr. Garpone and his silk ties and concrete. Like concrete is so important, not like the Dodgers, not like his Mama and Papa, ungrateful son of a bitch, what's he doing in Commack?

*JOSEPHINE still holds the coffee pot. She's trying to make a decision.*

ANTHONY, *Continued*

I noticed Mr. Garpone was here the other day. You didn't think I noticed, did you. What was he doing here? All dressed in his suit and shoes. Dropping off a letter from Anthony? Kid won't even buy his own postage? Why didn't you tell me? Why didn't you show me the letter? I saw the fancy dishes in the drying rack, the burnt candles, I know what's going on. And I found the letters in your drawer too Josephine. You don't think I know about all those letters from Anthony?

*JOSEPHINE sets down the pot, opens a drawer, and removes a small pile of letters. She bundles these neatly and places them in her purse.*

ANTHONY, *Continued*

You don't think I know what he says in all those letters? Next thing you know Mr. Garpone will be teaching Anthony Italian and he'll be eating Sunday dinner at your mother's instead of here.

**This is Not the End of "The Next Thing"**  
**Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**



ANN

I know. (*JIM continues reading.*) The lilacs were spent, I noticed that, how they were all in clusters, all dried-out, like they'd crumble in my hands. The daffodils too, but I expected that. (*JIM reads.*) You remember when the lilacs were in full bloom, last spring? Their smell so heavy, almost too much? I miss that.

JIM

The air is clean now, nice.

ANN

Yeah. (*JIM puts down his book. ANN notices this.*) I walked to the top of the hill, by the reservoir. I could see the foothills, in the distance, pushing into, I imagined walking there, the air clean, the way you like it, even a bit of a chill.

JIM

Yeah?

ANN

I hadn't been here since last spring, I had forgotten.... (*Beat.*) Then I walked past those clumps of dead daffodils.

JIM

Lilacs.

ANN

Spent. (*Beat.*)

JIM

The rhododendrons will be out soon.

*JIM touches ANN gently, his fingers lingering. She looks at his fingers.*

ANN

I stopped, right there, no more blossoms, just rot and leaves. (*Beat.*) I imagined them in bloom, you know, I wanted them to bloom so badly, I don't know why. (*Beat. JIM removes his fingers.*) And then— (*Beat.*)

JIM

What?

ANN

I saw this— (*Beat.*) Shadow, these shadows, moving, right in the field, right over there.

JIM

By that tree? (*He gestures.*)

ANN  
Yeah, kind of hidden in the grass.

JIM  
Groundhogs?

ANN  
No, bodies.

JIM  
*Bodies?*

ANN  
Two bodies. I walked closer to see—

JIM  
Ann—

ANN  
I know. I should have known better. But I couldn't help myself.

JIM  
(*He's angry.*) What are you crazy? Why did you do that? Why do you always? You could have—

ANN  
They were in the tall grass, like wheat, only I knew it wasn't wheat, but I kept thinking I could pick some and bake bread, I could pull some out of the ground and bake bread and we could eat the bread with our dinner.

JIM  
I hope you didn't—

ANN  
I wanted to see them—

JIM  
Jesus—

ANN  
He was on top of her, they had a blanket—

JIM  
Ann—

ANN

An old blanket, like a quilt, maybe handmade, it was wrapped around them. There was a breeze, kind of warm, and they were moving, and I heard them too. (*Beat.*)

JIM

You *stayed*?

ANN

I couldn't help it.

JIM

I'm going to read.

*He picks up his book.*

**This is Not the End of "Two Bodies in the Field"**  
**Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**



SAL

I know it's not just the garden. (*Pause.*) Adam and Eve were tempted too. (*They look at each other. There is longing in their look.*) The serpent told them about a fruit that would teach them to know good from evil, Eve ate the fruit then gave it to Adam, he ate it too, and they saw their nakedness. God found out, and they got in trouble because their nakedness was evil, they got sent away, out of the garden, and they had to work and still went hungry. (*Pause.*) We are their descendants, Maria. They were real. (*Pause.*) Maria, you've changed. (*Pause.*)

MARIA

Father Steve came to the orchard this morning, before you woke up. (*Pause.*) He asked for you. (*Pause.*) I told him you must be sleeping still, that you helped your mama late last night, that she had a fever and there was no doctor who would come to help and of course you knew how to speak English, maybe you could call La Casa and get some advice. He called you a good boy. I blushed. I remembered your arms in the orchard last week, your breath on my neck. (*SAL is very still.*) He told me he would let you sleep and that you could have a double lesson tomorrow. "A double lesson?" I asked. (*SAL picks apples slowly, methodically, in time with his breathing.*) "I'm teaching him the way of the robe," he said. I didn't know what that meant. "The way of the robe?" It sounded like a riddle or something from the old country.

SAL

He's been teaching me—

MARIA

Yes, he told me. (*Pause.*)

SAL

So I can teach others. (*Silence. They pick apples.*) I'm going to be a priest, Maria.

MARIA

Yes.

SAL

I'm going to tell the stories our divine Father put into His scripture. I'm going to spread the Word, Maria.

MARIA

Sal.

SAL

Our people need a priest, Maria. They need to know what's real in this world. (*Pause.*)

MARIA

Cortlands are real—

SAL

Maria—

MARIA

Their sweetness, it stays in my mouth and I can feel when my teeth break their skin. And Braeburns are real, with their little bit of tartness that lights firecrackers inside of me like on the Fourth of July. Empires are real with their hard flesh that fits in my hand. And Jonagolds, they also are real, even if they were invented in a lab, they still taste good when your mama slices them. McIntoshes are real with their juice that slides down my chin in the autumn warmth. Adam and Eve are not real.

SAL

Maria....

**This is Not the End of “They Were Real”**  
**Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**



ROGER

You should look for Fred.

SPIKE

Fred?

ROGER

Yeah, Fred. *(Beat.)* He haunts the basement of the visitor center.

DANIEL

That's crap Roger.

ROGER

What's up your ass?

DANIEL

Fort Montgomery is a National Historic Landmark.

ROGER

So? It can't be haunted?

DANIEL

I swear to God.

ROGER

I'm not saying it's not an important fortress—

DANIEL

Shut up Roger.

ROGER

I'm just saying that when my dad and I were there, the tour guide told us this story about a ghost named Fred, that's all.

DANIEL

*(Standing.)* Shut up Roger, have some fucking respect!

ROGER

I don't have respect? *(Beat.)* When my dad visited, we toured Fort Montgomery, what's disrespectful about that? *(Pause. DANIEL sits, his back to ROGER.)* The guide talked about some battle, about the British launching cannons on us, burning down Fort Montgomery as well as the other one, Clinton I think it was. *(Pause. No response.)* You don't care? Now who's disrespectful? *(Pause. No response.)* People died, Daniel. *(Pause. No response.)* Soldiers. *(Pause. No response.)* You guys suck, I'm getting some water. *(ROGER leaves.)*

Well? DANIEL

What was that all about? SPIKE

What? DANIEL

You were a little hard on him, don't you think? SPIKE

What are you gonna do? (*Beat.*) DANIEL

I'm not getting into this. SPIKE

Spike— DANIEL

Daniel. I'm not getting into this. SPIKE

*SPIKE stops punching the bag. He wipes his brow and sits next to DANIEL. Pause.*

Okay. DANIEL

I'm taking my dad to Fort Montgomery. (*Pause.*) SPIKE

And? DANIEL

And we'll look at the goddamn Hudson and listen to some guide tell us about bayonets and cannonballs from 230 years past. What else do you want? SPIKE

Spike. DANIEL

And British warships charging up the river and American Patriots holding their fucking ground. SPIKE

DANIEL  
You know what—

SPIKE  
Yeah, I know, and I'm tired. (*Pause.*) Why were you so hard on Roger?

DANIEL  
I wasn't hard on him.

SPIKE  
You were, you're always hard.

DANIEL  
He's an ass.

SPIKE  
You were pushing him.

DANIEL  
So?

SPIKE  
Why can't you leave it alone?

DANIEL  
Jesus—

SPIKE  
Daniel. (*Beat.*) Look, I'm tired of fighting.

DANIEL  
So am I.

SPIKE  
I wanna have pancakes at some diner, make jokes with my dad about Mom and Lisa's turkey at Thanksgiving, talk about Iraq and Afghanistan—

DANIEL  
You said you—

**This is Not the End of “Cold War”**  
**Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**

## HOME

**CHARACTERS:**     *LUCY; 13.*  
                          *JACK; 17, Lucy's brother.*  
                          *DAVID; 17, Jack's friend.*

*JACK and DAVID are huddled around a campfire at Golden Hill State Park on the shore of Lake Ontario. LUCY sits at a distance.*

DAVID

Lieutenant Colonel Bolton swore he'd seek revenge. "I will haunt you until her honor is restored," he cried, dashing his knife against the darkened clouds and fierce October winds.

JACK

You're good at this.

DAVID

The October winds cried back and in their cries Lieutenant Colonel Bolton heard the voice of his wife's brother. "Then you will haunt me for eternity," her brother said, driving Lieutenant Colonel Bolton to leap from the deck of The Ontario into the lake, slashing the waves with his knife, until he sank to the cold bottom like a dead stone.

LUCY

This is dumb. Bolton died with the rest of his eighty-eight passengers when The Ontario got hit by a blizzard.

JACK

Shut up Lucy. God, I can't believe they made us bring her.

DAVID

It's okay.

JACK

It's not okay. *(Pause.)* Whatever.

DAVID

Do you want the prequel?

JACK

Huh?

DAVID

The prequel, what happened before the ship left Fort Niagara.

JACK

Sure.

DAVID

*(DAVID uses a fake scary voice.)* Lieutenant Colonel Bolton's wife was heavy with child. *(JACK throws something at DAVID. DAVID laughs. LUCY shudders.)* "At last," Lieutenant Colonel Bolton thought. "At last I'll have an heir." He paced their dining-room and listened as his wife writhed in agony. She—what should her name be?

JACK

*(Laughs cruelly.)* Lucy.

DAVID

Okay. Lucy moaned as if possessed by the devil, by some creature with a will of its own that harbored in her womb. She moaned and Bolton paced, and the night got darker.

JACK

Yeah yeah, get to the good stuff!

DAVID

Suddenly, Bolton heard a scream. *(DAVID screams, then looks around—they're in a public park.)* At first, he thought the scream was typical of a woman about to deliver her first child, but he soon realized something terrible had happened.

JACK

Excellent!

DAVID

He dashed up the stairs and down the crooked hallway to the threshold of the bedroom. His wife lay on the bed.

*DAVID pauses for dramatic effect.*

JACK

Yeah?

DAVID

His wife lay on the bed in a pool of blood. And between her legs, where the baby should have been, a deformed creature with no legs and a head the size of a watermelon howled to the moon, slipping in its own juice, flailing its bent arms through the nightmare of its birth. Bolton's wife couldn't take her eyes off the creature. She stared and screamed until she fainted in his arms. Bolton had the midwife remove the creature at once and, when his wife recovered, he cradled her gently. "Lucy," he whispered. "Lucy...."

LUCY

Please don't use my name.

*JACK gives her a look. He moves closer to her. She stiffens.*

DAVID

Bolton didn't know what to do. "What could this mean?" he thought to himself. "How could this creature come from her womb?"

JACK

She did it with a werewolf!

*JACK makes a scary sound, pretending to attack LUCY. She stands and moves away. DAVID laughs.*

DAVID

Curious, Bolton rested his exhausted wife on the bed.

*JACK watches LUCY.*

JACK

In all that blood?

DAVID

Good point. Bolton lifted his wife's exhausted body and carried her to the parlor where he rested her on the divan.

*JACK still watches LUCY.*

JACK

Nice word.

DAVID

Thanks. He rested her on the divan and went back to the bedroom to see if he could solve the mystery. He looked in his wife's drawers, underneath the mattress, but found nothing.

*LUCY sits on the other side of the stage.*

JACK

He should look in her jewelry box.

LUCY

Shut up Jack.

DAVID

He looked in her jewelry box, and at the bottom someone had hidden a small pile of letters in a handwriting he didn't recognize. He removed the letters and sat on the bed.

JACK

Gross.

DAVID

Okay. He sat in a chair that faced the window and began to read. "To my dear Lucy..."

JACK

I knew it! She did it with someone else! The whore!

*JACK moves towards LUCY again.*

DAVID

"I still feel the curve of your breast beneath my fingers."

JACK

Finally....

DAVID

"And can taste your insides in my mouth." (*JACK is sitting next to LUCY.*) "Please forgive me, everything I did was out of love." Signed, "Roderick."

JACK

Who's Roderick? (*Beat.*) The plumber?

DAVID

They didn't have plumbers in 1780 idiot.

JACK

Uh, the pizza guy?

DAVID

Idiot.

JACK

A werewolf! I knew it! (*Pause.*)

DAVID

Her brother. Roderick was Lucy's brother.

*Silence. Both JACK and LUCY are completely still.*

DAVID, *Continued*

She had conceived before and had taken herbs, but herbs didn't work this time.

*DAVID notices his “audience” is affected by his story. He becomes more impassioned.*

*DAVID, Continued*

Bolton knew he could never restore her honor. Her brother had violated her body and he could never undo that violation.

*Beat. DAVID whispers. He’s a master storyteller, after all.*

**This is Not the End of “Home”**  
**Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**

**RELATIVITY**

*CHARACTERS:*        *CHASTITY; 18, African-American  
BRAD;19, white.*

*AT RISE:*            *CHASTITY and BRAD sit on an old sofa  
at a prestigious university in western  
New York and drink keg beer in plastic  
cups.*

CHASTITY

So what brought *you* here?

BRAD

Business Methods. (*CHASTITY laughs.*) My high-school Business Methods teacher always talked about this school, how it's so visionary and global. He taught us to go after things, I thought it would be cool and progressive to go to his school.

CHASTITY

His school?

BRAD

Well, he went here.

CHASTITY

Oh.

BRAD

Actually....

CHASTITY

Yeah?

BRAD

Never mind. (*Beat.*) What about you?

CHASTITY

What?

BRAD

What brought you here?

CHASTITY

I grew up here.

BRAD

No way!

CHASTITY

Yeah, just on the other side of the river, my bus would go over the Elmwood Street Bridge and I'd see the chapel and the observatory and I'd, you know.

BRAD

That's—

CHASTITY

Yeah.

BRAD

You're— (*Beat.*)

CHASTITY

Yeah.

*They drink, awkward.*

BRAD

I always wanted to meet a girl like you.

CHASTITY

What do you mean, "like me"?

BRAD

Nothing, there just aren't many girls like you where I'm from.

CHASTITY

Oh.

BRAD

My dad would— (*Beat.*)

CHASTITY

What?

BRAD

Nothing. So. Tell me about Rochester.

CHASTITY

Tell me about your dad.

BRAD

It's just that, he went here too. (*Beat.*) He's really smart.

CHASTITY

So are you, you wouldn't be here if you weren't.

BRAD

Sure.

CHASTITY

It's true.

BRAD

I get good grades.

CHASTITY

Exactly.

BRAD

That's not because I'm smart though. (*Beat.*) My dad... (*Beat.*) He helped me figure out some things.

CHASTITY

Like what?

BRAD

Like how to get good grades without being smart.

CHASTITY

What does that mean?

BRAD

Tell me about Rochester. (*Beat.*)

CHASTITY

What do you want to know?

BRAD

I don't know, tell me about your family.

CHASTITY

My dad drinks and my mom is a fat bitch, how's that?

BRAD

Wow.

CHASTITY

*(She laughs.)* Yeah. *(Pause.)* But the older couple who lives next door to me.... They're like ninety years old and they used to invite me into their parlor on Saturdays when I was in high school, it has this rickety piano and the guy would play and she would sing, and they'd go over my school reports with me and help me with math, and then they'd tell me all these stories about how they used to travel all over the country, marching for civil rights. When Obama was elected, they rode a bus to DC—they didn't think they'd see that, not in their lifetime.

BRAD

Cool.

CHASTITY

Yeah. I think a lot about that, civil rights. You know, my grammar school had this "Frederick Douglass" club.

BRAD

Frederick Douglass?

CHASTITY

Yeah, he's a big deal around here, he's buried right in Mount Hope Cemetery. And the club, once we went to Philadelphia for a contest, I still remember part of the speech I performed, it was for the Fourth of July. I don't remember the beginning, but later it goes, "The sunlight that brought light and healing to you, has brought stripes and death to me."

BRAD

That's intense.

CHASTITY

Yeah. I remember when Obama won, I went to his grave, Douglass' grave, and there were all these signs and t-shirts and newspaper clippings, "Yes We Can," "Yes We Can." I almost cried.

BRAD

There are definitely no girls like you back home.

CHASTITY

You keep saying that.

BRAD

It's true.

*Pause. Awkward.*

CHASTITY

Did you take physics in high school? (*Beat.*) I did, we learned about relativity, you know, that time isn't this universal constant but changes depending on a sequence of external variables? I know this isn't a great leap or discovery or anything, but I thought right away how relativity applies to real life too, how nothing is really constant or universal, but everything depends on all these variables. Like some people might think that because my father drinks he's a bad father, but he doesn't hit me and he asks me questions about my life. And my mother, she goes to Church three days a week but she's always saying that white folks are evil and girls are skanky, that I should be ashamed, and that I'm dumb.

BRAD

She'd hate me.

CHASTITY

She would.

BRAD

(*BRAD puts his arm around CHASTITY.*) I don't think you're skanky.

CHASTITY

(*She removes his arm.*) You keep talking about "girls like me." But that's relative too. There's no such thing as "girls like me." There's just me. When you say "girls like me," you're talking more about your own variables than anything about me, anything constant or real about me.

BRAD

Okay.

CHASTITY

You know, when I left Frederick Douglass' grave, I walked up the hill to Susan B. Anthony's grave. (*Pause.*) She's pretty famous too, she was this pioneer for women's suffrage. I walked to her grave that same day. There wasn't all the same fanfare there, just one little sticker, "I Voted Today," but that's when I cried. That one little sticker. You see, it's all relative. Women voted in this country since 1920, you'd think that would be old news, but that's what got me. And she was a white woman too, not "like me," but I understood that, that impulse, I understood why that stranger put that sticker there. For whatever reason, I understood.

*BRAD puts his arm around CHASTITY again.*

**This is Not the End of "Relativity"**  
**Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**

## LITTER

CHARACTERS: *JOSH; 40s.*  
*SYLVIA; 30s, Josh's wife.*  
*JASMINE; 40s.*  
*TOM; 40s, Jasmine's husband.*

*AT RISE:* *The eighteenth hole at a public golf course in New Paltz, New York. JOSH putts. He misses.*

JOSH

Damn.

SYLVIA

My god, let it go.

*JOSH quickly putts into the hole, picks up his ball, shoots SYLVIA a look, and puts his putter back in his bag.*

JASMINE

It's your turn, Sylvie. (*SYLVIA stands still.*) Sylvie and I played Monday. We needed to get out, right Sylvie? You know how it is, all stuffed up in town. College folks on one hand, hippies on the other, and those rednecks breeding their litters. (*Beat.*) Sylvie.

*SYLVIA watches JOSH as she walks towards her ball. She does some awkward measuring with her stick, bending down, eyeballing the cup, etc., during the following lines.*

JASMINE, *Continued*

They come from the city, hop on the train or take their hybrids, before you know it we've got tofu on all our menus. And those dirty kids with their snot noses, feeding off our taxpayer dollars, damn welfare state. Thank god we didn't have any Tom, right?

TOM

What's that?

*JASMINE gives SYLVIA a conspiratorial look.*

JASMINE

Thank god we didn't have any children, Tom, any dirty litters sucking the milk out of the state, not to mention my breasts.

*JASMINE holds her breasts.*

TOM

Our children wouldn't suck anything from the state, Jasmine. We pay into the system. We do not filch out of the system.

JASMINE

We should bomb the trains, keep those New Yorkers out of here, with their socialist ideas. Sylvie, come on, honey. (*SYLVIA puts into the cup. She picks up her ball and puts her club in her bag.*) And it's not just the New Yorkers, you know, it's us too, feeding into the university with its theoretical mishmash. No one looks at the mountains. People make abstract sculptures that "challenge the material construction of the mountains," but they don't look at the mountains. What are you doing, Sylvie?

*SYLVIA is still putting her club in the bag. Beat. Awkward.*

TOM

At least the college takes care of its own, not like those runts in the gutter.

JOSH

But the college doesn't pay taxes, don't forget.

SYLVIA

How *could* we forget?

JOSH

(*A warning.*) Sylvia.

JASMINE

They need to look at the mountains, or stand in the river— (*She puts her hand on SYLVIA's arm.*) Then they'll stop theorizing the "semiotics of cartography" and get their fucking feet wet. (*She laughs. To TOM.*) How do they get out of it?

JOSH

Non-profit.

JASMINE

(*Amused.*) Bullshit. What do you know about non-profit.

TOM

(*Teasing.*) Quite a bit more than you know about postmodern art.

JASMINE

We should bomb the college, bomb the train station, bomb the vegetarian soup shack on Main with its tofu-inspired vegetarian beef stew— (*JOSH laughs.*) And put little bombs in all the dollar bills we give to vagrants so they either explode or starve to death.

TOM

Don't forget, Jasmine, we have a thing tomorrow at the Weil, a fundraiser. No bombs please.

JASMINE

I'll behave, I always do. (*JOSH laughs again. SYLVIA stares at him. JOSH stops laughing. Awkward.*) Sylvie? (*SYLVIA, near tears, turns away. JASMINE watches her.*) Go ahead, Tom, it's your turn. (*TOM moves to his ball, quickly puts into the hole, retrieves his ball, places his club into his bag.*) Wow. I guess it's my turn. (*She walks to her ball, stands still.*) Boys, why don't you get us some martinis, let's get warmed up before we hit the clubhouse.

TOM

I don't know if that's a good idea, Jasmine.

JASMINE

Tom.

*Beat. An understanding.*

TOM

Josh?

JOSH

Why not?

*TOM and JOSH pick up their bags and exit. Pause.*

SYLVIA

I don't want to talk about it.

JASMINE

Well that's too bad. Jesus Sylvia. You and Joshua—

SYLVIA

This isn't about Josh!

JASMINE

This damn well is about Joshua. You can't keep this up and expect the four of us to spend time together, not in public—

SYLVIA

Maybe—

JASMINE

—you can't. (*Beat. More gently.*) It's me, for chrissake, Sylvie, tell me.

SYLVIA

(*Pause.*) You already know. (*Pause.*)

JASMINE

Sylvie....

SYLVIA

Please stop.

JASMINE

Fine, have it your way. I'll sink this putt, you know I will, and I'll walk into that clubhouse and there will be nothing.

SYLVIA

That's not fair. (*JASMINE prepares to putt.*) Please. (*JASMINE relaxes.*) Thank you.

*SYLVIA takes time to sit on the green.*

JASMINE

Sylvia....

SYLVIA

On Monday, after we played, I had a drink at the clubhouse.... (*SYLVIA takes off one of her shoes. JASMINE watches her.*) A martini. I thought about the day I met you three, you and Tom and—and we were here, do you remember? *They* were at the bar and *you* bought me a drink, and I told you I never lived by mountains before, and you laughed and asked me if I thought Joshua was—and you whispered to me that you....

JASMINE

(*She whispers.*) That I hate men. (*She laughs and leans against her putter.*) I still won't let poor Tom touch me.

*Pause. SYLVIA takes off her other shoe.*

SYLVIA

After you left, that first day, I looked at the mountains, those mountains right over there, and I wondered what it means to be so *cold*, and I walked through that small bunch of pines behind the ninth hole, by myself, I don't know if you've ever noticed them.

JASMINE

Oh Sylvie....

SYLVIA

I took off my shoes and rolled up my pants—and I stood in the river, you know, the Walkkill, right there— (*She cries softly.*) Right behind the ninth hole, the water *cold* and I could hear people laughing, but they couldn't see me, no one could see me because of the trees, because of the....

JASMINE

(*Pause. This next speech is gentle.*) You listen to me, Sylvia—

SYLVIA

Jas....

JASMINE

You might think you don't want Josh anymore—

SYLVIA

I never—

JASMINE

You might think you're stuck and fantasize about some free-as-the-wind, something, but it's not pretty out there, and you have no money of your own, and Josh is a lawyer.

SYLVIA

I can't—

JASMINE

Sylvia! (*Beat.*) I won't let Tom touch me. (*Beat.*) But I talk to him, at least in public. (*Beat.*) I talk to him about taxes and the mountains and paintings at the Weil, and even if none of it's real— (*Pause. SYLVIA turns away.*) Sylvie.... (*Beat.*) Put your shoes on Sylvia. (*SYLVIA starts putting her shoes back on.*) You've got to take better care of yourself.

SYLVIA

I know. (*She finishes putting her shoes back on, stands, and faces JASMINE. Pause.*) You know what I want.

**This is Not the End of “Litter”**  
**Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**

**BACKWARDS**

*CHARACTERS:*        *DARCY; 30s, female, almost like a cartoon character.*  
                              *OLIVIA; 40s.*

*AT RISE:*                *OLIVIA poses by Lake Chautauqua, and DARCY paints.*

DARCY

When I was in school, I used to talk like that too. (*DARCY hums while shifting some aspect of OLIVIA's pose, then begins painting again.*) I used to use all those big words too, full of air, you're all so full of air.

OLIVIA

Darcy—

DARCY

(*Sing-songy.*) Uh—keep your mouth shut! (*She paints.*) Now I don't worry about being full of air, now I have a job, now I use *technology*.

OLIVIA

But—

DARCY

I don't know why you can't keep your mouth shut. (*Silence. DARCY paints.*) I've come here for as long as I can remember, at least five years, I *used* to love going to the lectures, listening to some scholar blah-blah about the meaning of life, ha! (*Silence. DARCY paints.*) You think you know so much, go to all those lectures, life-long learning, blah-blah-blah.

OLIVIA

Those—

DARCY

Don't move! (*Beat.*) Lectures about dead people—

OLIVIA

Why—

DARCY

Dead ideas, ha!

OLIVIA

But—

DARCY

Your skin is lovely. Have you been to the lake this morning?

*Pause. DARCY paints.*

OLIVIA

Why do you come? You said you come every year, you told me that—

DARCY

Don't move! (*Beat.*) While *you* were at the morning lecture *I* walked to the lake and watched the birds.

OLIVIA

That's hardly—

DARCY

Blah-blah about the birds. (*Beat. She's confused.*) There was a big one, skinny legs....

OLIVIA

A great blue heron?

DARCY

Standing just about where you are, almost to my chest. (*Beat.*) Why don't they talk about something *practical*. I just want something concrete, you know, defined, something I can *use* in my *job*.

OLIVIA

I think you're missing—

DARCY

So I approached her—

OLIVIA

\Who?

DARCY

The bird, I was quiet, that thing on her head— (*Beat.*)

OLIVIA

Her crest.

DARCY

All, in the sunlight, like your skin. (*Silence. She paints.*) Five years, nothing practical, nothing *good* for me, nothing I can measure! (*Beat.*) That's why I've stopped going to the lectures.

Why do you come then? (*Silence.*) OLIVIA

I didn't— (*Beat.*) DARCY

What? (*Beat.*) OLIVIA

I didn't want to scare her. (*Beat.*) DARCY

The heron? OLIVIA

Certainly not to hurt her. Stop moving! (*She paints.*) I walked slowly, I wanted— (*Beat.*) DARCY

Sure. OLIVIA

Then I turned around, I approached her *backwards.* DARCY

Backwards? OLIVIA

I thought that might help. DARCY

Did it? OLIVIA

**This is Not the End of “Backwards”**  
**Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**

## GAY MARRIAGE

CHARACTERS:     *MICHAEL; teenager.*  
                      *STEVE; teenager.*  
                      *BARB; 40s.*  
                      *STELLA; 40s.*

*AT RISE:*             *MICHAEL and STEVE sit on a wagon at Ocean Beach waiting for the ferry to arrive.*

MICHAEL

Any minute now.

STEVE

Another twenty bucks.

MICHAEL

I can feel the money in my hands! *(They high-five each other or some kind of handshake.)* So, who is it?

STEVE

Some lady.

MICHAEL

Yeah?

STEVE

Stella.

MICHAEL

Did she sound hot?

STEVE

You ass.

MICHAEL

Well? *(Beat.)*

STEVE

Yeah. *(They high-five each other or some kind of handshake.)* But don't get your hopes up.

MICHAEL

What, she won't want this? *(He indicates his own body, then stands.)* There's the ferry, I can see it!

STEVE

Twenty bucks, all for papa.

MICHAEL

That's two beers each.

STEVE

Sure, at Housers, *or* a couple of six-packs and we could hang behind the dunes.

MICHAEL

Excellent. (*Beat.*) And Stella could join us.

STEVE

Yeah, with her new husband, who will beat your ass.

MICHAEL

Are you serious?

STEVE

She's honeymooning. (*MICHAEL sits back down in the wagon.*) Yep, that's what she said, coming to the beach for her honeymoon.

MICHAEL

(*He lies down in the wagon.*) I think we can use this information.

STEVE

How?

MICHAEL

We schmooze them, play them off each other, we can get bigger tips! (*The ferry bleats its horn.*) Who needs Stella when we'll have more money! (*STEVE picks up a simple, handmade sign that says "Stella."*) I'm imagining a big tall sand dune, you and me getting loaded with *three* six-packs, the moon full in the night sky, some deer munching the ocean grass, and then....

STEVE

Yeah?

MICHAEL

Kim.... She'll walk by in her hot heels, stumble a little, I'll push her on the swing, we'll talk about our childhoods, retire to the dunes, sip some Amstel Light, and the full moon will do its dirty work....

STEVE

Even better....

MICHAEL

Yeah?

STEVE

Stella will walk by, crying because her new husband ignored her at dinner, and you and I will console her, take *her* to the sand dune....

*They high-five each other or some kind of handshake. BARB walks up to them carrying two heavy suitcases.*

BARB

You must be Steve. Thanks so much for meeting us here. This is great!

STEVE

No problem, ma'am, we're glad to help.

*He shoots MICHAEL a look. BARB laughs.*

BARB

Aren't you polite!

STEVE

We aim to please.

*STEVE takes one suitcase, MICHAEL takes the other, and they load them onto the wagon.*

MICHAEL

How was the ride over?

BARB

Smooth, the salt air felt so good, and the water, that gray, I couldn't stop looking at it.

STEVE

Wait 'til you see the ocean.

BARB

I know.

*STELLA walks over with two heavy suitcases.*

Steve! STELLA

Huh? STEVE

Are you Steve? STELLA

Yeah. Who are you? STEVE

I'm Stella, we spoke over the phone, I'm honeymooning. STELLA

Oh, I'm sorry, there must have been a misunderstanding, I thought— (*STEVE turns to BARB.*) There must be two Steves working today, and I've already promised to help this young woman and her new husband. (*BARB laughs. STEVE gets an idea.*) I don't want to take someone else's job, ma'am, but if you can't find *your* guy, Michael and I will be happy to help you too. STEVE

**This is Not the End of "Gay Marriage"**  
**Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**

**PLAY WITHOUT A PROMPT**

*CHARACTERS:*        *LOUDSPEAKER; a voice.*  
                              *PERSON; a traveler.*  
                              *BUSKER; a busker.*  
                              *PASSENGERS; a various group.*

*AT RISE:*                *Penn Station, bathed in green light.*

**LOUDSPEAKER**

Pennsylvania Station. Green alert. Green alert. Low level. Low risk.

*A PERSON enters carrying a suitcase. He/she sits on a bench, puts down the suitcase, looks around, and exits—leaving the suitcase behind. Green lights intensify to blue.*

**LOUDSPEAKER, Continued**

Pennsylvania Station. Blue alert. Blue alert. Guarded level. General risk.

*A BUSKER enters, sets up a collection box, and starts playing. Blue lights intensify to yellow.*

**LOUDSPEAKER, Continued**

Pennsylvania Station. Yellow alert. Yellow alert. Elevated level. Significant risk.

**This is Not the End of “Play Without a Prompt”**  
**Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**

CONTINUE TO NEXT PAGE FOR  
PROPERTY LIST

## PROPERTY LIST

This property list is only a suggestion. It's possible for a production team to substitute or even mime.

### *Will They Know Who We Are?*

- Various-sized steel boxes

### *The Door*

- Packing boxes
- Packing tape
- Newspaper
- Tools

### *Speaking Through a Screen*

- Chair
- Blanket
- Window
- Electric gardening tool
- Pile of large stones

### *Ninety Degrees*

- Backpack
- Walking stick
- 2 apples
- Water bottle
- Whiskey flask

### *Page Twenty-Seven*

- 2 backpacks
- Walking stick
- Handmade splint
- Guide book
- Jacket
- Flashlight
- Bag of carrots

### *Goodbye*

- Chair

### *Part of Your Body*

- Bench
- Newspaper

### *Little Hands*

- Table
- 3 chairs
- 3 wine glasses with wine

### *War/Bathtub*

- Bathtub
- Towel

### *As Little Conscious Thought as Possible*

- Nothing

*Kink*

- Railing
- Camera phone

*Voyeurism*

- Table
- 2 chairs
- 2 whiskey glasses with whiskey

*Steal*

- Table
- Chair
- Old typewriter with paper
- 2 cigarettes

*Rip Van Winkle*

- Table
- Coffee mug
- Pipe
- Pipe tobacco
- Bar with stools
- 2 beer mugs with beer
- Cell-phone

*It Gets You*

- Farming tools
- Table
- Baskets of green onions, tomatoes, purple potatoes, zucchini
- Cell-phone

*Putting Off*

- Bed with blankets
- Window

*Sexy Decoy*

- Hardcover edition of *Leaves of Grass*
- Fishing pole
- Wooden fish-shaped lure

*The Next Thing*

- Table
- Porcelain coffee pot
- 2 porcelain coffee cups and saucers
- Mixing bowl
- Carton of eggs
- Salt, pepper, and/or milk
- Whisk
- Wad of cash tied with a string
- Pile of letters
- Purse

*Two Bodies in a Field*

- Picnic blanket
- Picnic basket with food

- Book

*They Were Real*

- 2 ladders
- Apples
- 2 buckets

*Cold War*

- Punching bag
- Bottle of water

*Home*

- Campfire

*Relativity*

- Sofa
- 2 plastic cups filled with beer
- Pills

*Litter*

- 4 golf bags with putters and golf balls
- 4 martini glasses with martinis
- Socks and shoes

*Backwards*

- Easel with paints

*Gay Marriage*

- Wagon
- Luggage
- Sign

*Play Without a Prompt*

- Various musical instruments, busker-style

## ADDENDUM

The original production featured seventeen of the plays with one intermission. The following text, performed by “Citizen,” was inserted between plays to create a thru-line.

*Where to start? Mountains and lakes, or oceans and islands? Let us turn ourselves, let us rotate to the east.... Because, in the end, it depends on the beginning. And the island was always small....*

*Not our past but our future, not our mothers or fathers but our children, the racks upon which we hang our flesh.... But sometimes.... Even when our children move inside our wombs, sometimes it's still too still....*

*We need our own days to mark, our own days to honor, the last stop busters, the last stop before we dig up our own bones....*

*Yes! Of course, this is how we decide who we are! Our politics, our ideologies! We've measured and we've marked, the people will get off their trains, they'll stop and stare, because we know who we are! Because we want to live....*

*And scientists will come in the future and figure us out! Twenty-nine degrees to the east of the geographic north! Twenty-nine degrees to the east of love.... They'll say, “We could learn to love.” They'll say, “We could learn to eat the bread....”*

*But they won't know what it means, the raison d'etre, they'll look at their graphs and electronic texts, but they won't know what it means. The young ones with their fancy hats will stand on blocks of steel, and we will look at them, and that's when we will cry....*

*Maybe they'll take off their hats and bake apple pies and pull the levers in old voting booths, but will they know who we are? Maybe they'll scratch their heads and.... Our ocean and lakes, our mountains and islands, so much living, and they will never know who we are....*